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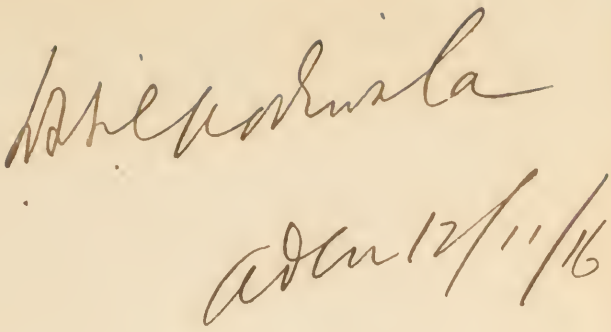

ZOROASTRIAN THEOLOGY

ZOROASTRIAN THEOLOGY

From the Earliest Times to the Present Day

BY

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High Priest of the Parsis of Northwestern India

NEW YORK

1914

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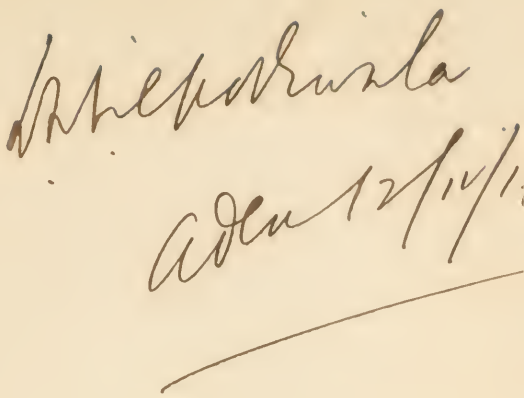

To
THE IRANIAN SCHOLARS
OF THE WEST
PAST AND PRESENT

PREFACE

Since the year 1771, when that worthy pioneer of romantic renown in Iranian studies, Anquetil du Perron, published his three volumes containing the first European translation of the Avesta, or Sacred Book of Zoroaster, great strides forward have been made in the West in the realm of Iranian research. The field is now replete with the lasting monuments of Western scholarship, whether in the department of standard editions of the sacred texts or the compilation of grammars and dictionaries, or again in the preparation of scientific translations as well as in making exegetical and philological researches. The service that these scholars have thus rendered to the Parsis is greater than can ever be expressed. By way of recording some expression, however inadequate, of the debt of gratitude that my community owes to them, I have inscribed this work to the Iranian scholars of the West, both past and present. Unto those who have passed away let the reward be *vahishtem ahūm ashaounām raochanghem vīspo-khvāthrem,* 'the shining, all-happy paradise of the righteous,' and may the noble band of workers who are still living be blessed with *vohu-jiti us-jiti dareghem-jiti,* 'good life, happy life, and long life.'

It is through the Western scholars that the science of comparative philology, of scholarship based on scientific principles, and the spirit of research work have reached the Parsis. If the present work exhibits any methodic treatment on the lines of Western scholarship, it is due to the inspiring influence and scientific training of my former teacher and always friend, Professor A. V. Williams Jackson of Columbia University, who combines in his person the best elements of Iranian scholarship and the greatest zeal for Zoroastrian researches. I am grateful to him for the cordial response with which he has placed his time at my disposal and read over the entire manuscript before it went to the press. His scholarly criticism has been of great value to me for the interpretation and elucidation of the various problems that defy easy solution. Pleasant indeed it was to have an

opportunity of supplementing my previous three years of work at Columbia University under his *guru*ship, by an added period of seven more months of scholarly association with him this year, at my Alma Mater again, that have been months of renewed enlightenment and inspiration.

I am indebted to Dr. Charles J. Ogden who, besides reading my book in manuscript and revising the proofsheets, has helped me in the citation of classical references, and favoured me with valuable suggestions.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to Dr. George C. O. Haas, who, as in the case of my previous work, has carefully read the proofsheets as they passed through the press, and has given his critical advice in matters typographical.

M. N. Dhalla.

New York,
December 15, 1914.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AF.	=	Arische Forschungen.
Air. Wb.	=	Altiranisches Wörterbuch (Bartholomae).
AnAtM.	=	Andarz-i Atarpat-i Maraspand.
AnKhK.	=	Andarz-i Khusru-i Kavatan.
Aog.	=	Aogemadaecha.
Artax. Pers.	=	inscriptions of Artaxerxes at Persepolis.
Av.	=	Avesta.
AV.	=	Arda Viraf.
Bd.	=	Bundahishn.
Bh.	=	Behistan.
bk.	=	book.
BYt.	=	Pahlavi Bahman Yasht.
cf.	=	(*confer*), compare.
Dar. Alv.	=	inscriptions of Darius on Mt. Alvand (Elvend), near Hamadan.
Dar. Pers.	=	inscriptions of Darius at Persepolis.
Db.	=	Dabistan.
Dd.	=	Dadistan-i Denik.
Dk.	=	Dinkard.
ed.	=	edition of, edited by.
Eng.	=	English.
EpM.	=	Epistles of Manushchihr.
ERE.	=	Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (Hastings).
FHG.	=	Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum (Müller).
G.	=	Gah.
GIrPh.	=	Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie.
Gs.	=	Ganj-i Shayikan.
Guj.	=	Gujarati.
i.e.	=	(*id est*), that is.
ibid.	=	(*ibidem*), in the same work.
Is.	=	Isaiah.
Hn.	=	Hadokht Nask.
Jsp.	=	Jamaspi.
JAOS.	=	Journal of the American Oriental Society.
JRAS.	=	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.
KZ.	=	Kuhn's Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Sprachforschung.
Mkh.	=	Menuk-i Khrat.
NR.	=	inscriptions of Darius at Naksh-i Rustam.
Nr.	=	Nirangistan.
Ny.	=	Nyaish.
Pers.	=	Persian.

Pt.	=	Patit.
Phl.	=	Pahlavi.
Rv.	=	Rivayat.
SBE.	=	Sacred Books of the East.
Sd.	=	Sad Dar.
Sg.	=	Shikand Gumanik Vijar.
Skt.	=	Sanskrit.
Sr.	=	Sirozah.
SlS.	=	Shayast-la-Shayast.
TdFr.	=	Tahmuras Fragment.
tr.	=	translated by, translation of.
Vd.	=	Vendidad.
vers.	=	version.
vol.	=	volume.
Vsp.	=	Visperad.
WFr.	=	Westergaard Fragment.
Xerx. Pers.	=	inscriptions of Xerxes at Persepolis.
Ys.	=	Yasna.
Yt.	=	Yasht.
ZDMG.	=	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.
Zsp.	=	Zatsparam.

INTRODUCTION

Scope of the work. The Gathic, Avestan, and Pahlavi periods have already received separate treatment in the works hitherto printed on the religion of Zoroaster. It may be said, however, that none of these treats the history of Zoroastrian theology as a whole. It is essential to a clear comprehension of the religious thought prevalent in the Parsi community at various epochs of its history to present a concise account of religious beliefs from the pre-Gathic times down to the present day. The present work attempts to do this, and it will, I hope, meet the needs of my co-religionists desirous of obtaining a general knowledge of the gradual process of the development of Zoroastrian theology from its early simplicity to the complexity which it exhibits at present.

Its aim. It augurs well for the community that religious studies have of late been carried on with greater zeal than before among the Parsis. Different schools undertake to interpret the sacred books according to their various methods. The philologist and the scientist, the rationalist and the mystic are all in the field. Everyone looks at the question from his own angle of vision, and sees it in a different light. The result is that the average Parsi remains in a state of vacillation between these conflicting views. The reader will find a short account of the teachings of these different schools in the closing chapters of the book. In chronicling the development of religious thought in the community, I have attempted, as far as it has been practicable, not to write as a partisan. I have aimed at an independent inquiry without prepossession in favour of one belief or another. I have not directed my energy to reading into the texts far-fetched interpretations with a view to investing them with a rational garb; neither have I attempted to attach occult and esoteric significance to the plain words of the sacred texts in order to cover them under a mystic cloak. Though conscious of the fact that I write as a minister of the faith of Zoroaster, I have not allowed the clerical zeal to supersede the impartiality of a scholar. I have not rated scholarship less than ministry. Hence it is that I have not resorted to sophistical arguments to defend apologetically dogmas and doctrines that have clustered round

the pristine teachings of Zoroaster. I have aimed throughout at the presentation of an ungarnished account of the gradual growth of the religious ideas, as the history of the three thousand years of the religion of the great prophet has recorded them.

Arrangement and method. I have divided the entire period of the history of Zoroastrianism on the linguistic basis. The earliest Zoroastrian documents are the Gathas, written in the Gathic dialect. They represent the earliest phase of the religion of Zoroaster. But ancient Iran had a religion which preceded Zoroastrianism in point of time. It was the naturalistic religion evolved by a people in a primitive state of culture, who had advanced to the stage of conceiving the natural world as peopled with spirits. I have labelled this period pre-Gathic; for its beginning is lost in remote antiquity, and the advent of Zoroaster brings its end.

The time when Zoroaster flourished is a moot question. I have accepted the approximate date 1000 B.C, which the consensus of scholarly opinion assigns to him. Zoroaster revolutionizes the religious life of the Iranians, which hitherto represented the evolutionary phase of religion. It was the movement in which we find the religious thought creeping for ages to rise from the lower to the higher level. To put this in another way, the pre-Gathic religion of Iran is the evolution of the religious thought of many men and many ages; Zoroaster's is the creation of one man and one age. The prophet of Iran establishes a new religion. In the pre-Gathic religion the trend of religious thought struggles from the complex to the simple, from concrete to abstract, and is yet the farthest removed from the ideal stage. Zoroastrianism, on the other hand, as preached in the Gathas is the very embodiment of the simple and the abstract. It is the realization of the ideal. It is the norm to which the coming generations have to conform. Deviation from it would mean a fall, a degeneration of the religious life. This second period I have termed Gathic.

Decay soon begins in the language in which Zoroaster composed his immortal hymns, and his successors now write in the Avestan dialect, which replaces the Gathic. The Avestan language remains the written language of the Zoroastrians from now onward to probably the last days of the Parthians, when the Pahlavi language becomes the court language of the Sasanians

and supersedes the Avestan. The most extensive literature on Zoroastrianism is written in Avestan. This period, which I have called Later Avestan period, extends to the early part of the Pahlavi era and goes even beyond it. When the two periods thus overlap each other, it often becomes difficult to determine whether a certain phase of religious thought is on one side or the other of the dividing line between them. The Avestan works, in the form in which they were written in the Avestan period, no longer exist. They were scattered by the storm that swept over Persia when Alexander conquered the country, and shook her religious edifice to its base. The form in which the Avestan texts have reached us is that which was given them during the Pahlavi period. The artists employed to restore the broken edifice belong to the Pahlavi period, but the materials used come down from the Avestan sources.

The Pahlavi period ranks fourth in the arrangement of the present work, and it covers a period of about eight centuries. Although it is most productive under the Sasanian rule, it does not close with the collapse of this, the last of the Zoroastrian empires, but survives it by at least three centuries in Moslem Persia. Though Pahlavi had replaced Avestan, the early works written in the ancient language had not yet ceased to influence the Pahlavi writers. In fact, some of the most important of the Pahlavi works are either versions of some Avestan works now lost to us, or draw their thought from the Avestan sources. Thus, the Pahlavi Bundahishn is the epitome of the Avestan Damdat Nask, subsequently lost. Similarly, not a few of the Pahlavi works written two or three centuries after the conquest of Persia by the Arabs tenaciously preserve the tradition handed down by Sasanian Persia. These are characterized by two layers of thought, one traditional; and the other representing new thought current during the writers' times. The Menuk-i Khrat, for example, betrays Moslem influence when it preaches fatalism, but is otherwise faithfully voicing the sentiments of the orthodox Sasanian Church. This interweaving of old ideas with the new ones, and the interpolations and additions of the later writers in the works of earlier generations, often make it hopeless to disentangle the complications and to distinguish between the opinions and ideas of different periods.

Thirteen hundred years have elapsed since the dissolution of

the last of the Zoroastrian empires. Henceforth we have to record the religious history of the Zoroastrian remnants in Persia and the Zoroastrian settlers of India. Zoroastrianism sinks with the Zoroastrian power, and a long period of obscurity follows. I have named it a period of decadence.

Under the aegis of the British rule in India Zoroastrianism emerges once again with the prosperity of the Parsi community. I have hailed this as the period of the revival of Zoroastrianism.

These various periods, which represent chronologically different stages of the historic development of the religious thought of Iran, from remote antiquity down to the immediate present, will, I hope, give the reader a general and comprehensive view of the history of Zoroastrian theology. As the subjects are treated piecemeal in different periods according to the natural growth of ideas from period to period, the reader will have to read crosswise when he needs a complete account of any particular concept. For example, if he wants to know all that the Zoroastrian literature has to say about Ormazd, he will get it as a whole not from any one period, but from all. The detailed list of contents and the index will help him in his inquiry.

Transliteration of the technical terms. I have sought to preserve the changes that these have undergone during successive periods, and have variously transliterated them in the treatment of the different periods, according as they represent the Avestan, Pahlavi, or Persian pronunciations. Thus, for example, Ahura Mazda of the Gathic and Avestan periods becomes Ormazd in the Pahlavi period. Angra Mainyu assumes the form Ahriman in the subsequent periods. The Avestan Vohu Manah changes into Pahlavi Vohuman and into Bahman in Persian and Gujarati. In the frequent use of the name of the prophet, I have, however, not scrupulously followed this method. I have distinguished between the Avestan and Pahlavi forms by writing Zarathushtra for the first, and Zaratusht for Pahlavi as they actually occur in these languages; but I have adopted the more familiar form Zoroaster for general use. Similarly, I have called the religion of the prophet Zoroastrianism. With a view to simplicity for the general reader, I have avoided, as far as it has been practicable, the free use of diacritical marks, and have employed simple transcriptions of the names of the heavenly beings, persons, and books when they occur in the text.

PRE-GATHIC PERIOD

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO ABOUT 1000 B.C.

ZOROASTRIAN THEOLOGY

CHAPTER I

THE PRIMITIVE FAITH OF IRAN

Pre-Gathic or prehistoric period. In the primitive period prehistoric to the Gathas we are traversing the region of myth, and not of history, when we attempt to write about the religious beliefs and practices of the people of Iran before the coming of Zoroaster. It is a period that can scarcely be said to have a history in the modern sense of the term. It has a myth instead. Everything is lost in the mists of time. We are here groping our way through a dark region without any hope of rays of light to illumine our path, for materials fail us, and it is likely that no authentic information will ever be obtained to clear up the real conditions that prevailed in this gray dawn of antiquity, important though such information would be for the study of Zoroastrianism and Zoroastrian theology in their historical aspects.

The cleavage in the Aryan group. What little information we get comes from Avestan works written long after the death of Zarathushtra, and these record religious beliefs that are closely akin to those of the Vedas. Of the various branches of the Indo-European peoples the Aryan settlers in the realms of Iran and India lived the closest and longest together of any of the Aryan stock that were associated with Western Asia in the hoary past. They were the members of one and the same family, thriving under a common parent, and they spoke practically the same language. Various have been the conjectures made to determine the time and place when this group lived together in peace, before Ahriman spread discord in their happy family. The cleavage caused the diverse parties to leave their common habitat, wherever that may have been, and to migrate

to Iran on one side and to India on the other. Very little is known with certitude, and in all probability more will never be known. The Avestan texts preserve some relics of the common worship and common legends of the two sister peoples, as well as allow us to judge some of the strong points of difference that arose among them. The parallels in religious thought which the Avestan documents offer to the Vedic concepts are many, but equally so are the contrasts. The resemblance is great indeed, but the difference is still greater.

The Aryan settlers of Iran. The period when this branch of the Aryan stock came to Iran, as inferred above, is equally unknown. In the Avestan texts we find these settlers already located in Iran, vigorously following agricultural pursuits, and practising the beliefs that they had brought with them from their ancient home. The sacred books designate these pioneers in Iranian religion as the *paoiryo-tkaesha,* 'of the primitive faith.' Gaya Maretan, the primeval man, according to the Zoroastrian anthropogeny, was also the first ruler of Iran. He was the first mortal to hear the precepts of Ahura Mazda,[1] and his legendary successor Haoshyangha was the reputed founder of the first dynasty called *para-dhāta,* 'of primitive law.' With Yima, the counterpart of Vedic Yama, Ahura Mazda, the supreme God of Ancient Iran, desired, it is said, to establish his covenant and requested him to be the divine messenger of his religion to the people of Iran, but the illustrious king pleaded his inability to undertake the great mission.[2] In a sense this king of immemorial date did spread the divine word among men for their betterment in both worlds.[3] Renowned monarchs like him and other great personages are the forerunners of Zoroaster, and the work done by them forms a prelude to the great work that the prophet of Iran was to undertake.

Presumable characteristics of their religion. We shall try to gather some information about the religious beliefs of these people who inhabited Iran long before the birth of Zarathushtra. The Avestan writers record traditions of their predecessors still current in their time, and enable us to form some idea of what doctrines and cults prevailed in Iran long before Zarathushtra preached his religion. These traditions are of great value to

[1] Yt. 13. 87.
[2] Vd. 2. 3.
[3] Dk., tr. Peshotan and Darab Sanjana, vol. 7, p. 435.

us because they are nearer to the pre-Zoroastrian period by well-nigh three thousand years than we are. Much of what they say, it is true, belongs to the post-Zoroastrian period in form, but is pre-Zoroastrian in substance, even though a good deal of what they repeat regarding the remote past could not be free from the bias of the sentiment and beliefs that might have been prevailing among them. For instance, when these writers, themselves the votaries of Ardvi Sura Anahita, or guardian spirit of the heavenly stream, depict the legendary king Haoshyangha, reported by the Zoroastrian chronology to have existed some thousands of years before them, as sacrificing unto this genius of water in a certain manner, they may, in these special passages in the Younger Avesta, be crediting the ancient king and the people of his time with their own ideas about this female divinity.[4] Looking from their own perspective, they may thus be attributing to the earlier generation some views that could never have prevailed in that dim past. We should not class their statement about the religion of a king who is remote from them by millenniums as reliable history, but, nevertheless, it at least serves to familiarize us with the views that our ancestors held three thousand years ago about the religious beliefs of the period that preceded their time.

Worship of the personifications of nature and other heavenly beings. Fire and water, sun and moon, earth and heaven, as well as all the forces of nature, have their votaries in primitive Iran. People instinctively paid homage to these deified elements. Mithra, Airyaman, Haoma, Verethraghna, Parendi, Nairyosangha, Vayu, Ushah, and other old Aryan divinities, as also Anahita, the female divinity of Semitic origin, were individually worshipped in Iran. On the other hand, Drvaspa, and Ashi Vanghuhi are pre-Zoroastrian angels of pure Iranian extraction, for they have no counterparts in the Vedic pantheon. The Iranian genius had not yet developed the concept of one supreme being who excelled all others. Every one of the divinities was independent in his own sphere, and claimed especial reverence and sacrifice from his devotees. Each moved among equals that knew no superior. There was no central sovereign figure in whom all divine power and authority was concentrated. Kings there were many, but the king of kings was yet to come. The

[4] Yt. 5. 21-23.

people of Iran knew him not, for Zarathushtra was yet to be born.

Designations of the divinities. More than one are the epithets by which the divine beings are generally known. The name *Ahura,* or lord, the first element of the later compound expression, Ahura Mazda, the supreme godhead of Zoroastrianism, is the title most commonly applied to the divinities to whom the primitive Iranians sacrificed. The word is the counterpart of the Vedic *Asura.* The Indo-Iranian divinities Mithra and Apam Napat are thus termed the *ahuras,* or the lords.[5] The term is even loosely employed to designate the temporal lords or chiefs, as when King Haosravah is called an *ahura;*[6] and similarly the chiefs are called by the same appellation.[7]

Baga, corresponding to the Vedic *Bhaga,* is another designation for the celestial beings in general. The term means 'dispenser' and goes back to the early Indo-European period.

Yazata, Vedic *Yajata,* meaning the 'adorable one,' is still another title that is commonly applied to the spiritual beings.

Kings and heroes pay homage unto the divinities. Haoshyangha, Takhma Urupi, Yima, Thraetaona, and Keresaspa sacrifice unto Vayu, a personification of the wind.[8] The serpent king Azhi Dahaka, the embodiment of a despotic foreign rule over Iran for a thousand years, also sacrifices unto him and asks of him a boon. This tyrant usurper fancied that the divinity who protected the land of Iran would be inclined to help him if he prostrated himself before him; but the spirit of the wind referred to did not grant him his boon.[9] Haoshyangha, Yima, Thraetaona, Keresaspa, Usa, Haosravah, Tusa, and Vafra Navaza invoke Ardvi Sura Anahita and are granted their prayers, but the offerings of the foreign tyrants Azhi Dahaka, Franrasyan, and Vaesaka are rejected.[10] Hvarekhshaeta, the genius of the sun, Atar, the angel of fire, and other popular divinities are not expressly mentioned in the extant Avestan literature as having been adored by the pre-Zoroastrian people of Iran. Yet this should not lead us to dogmatize that they were unknown to

[5] Ys. 1. 5; 2. 5; 3. 7; 65. 12; 70. 6; Yt. 10. 25, 69; 19. 52; G. 3. 8.
[6] Yt. 19. 77.
[7] Yt. 5. 85; 8. 36; 13. 63; 14. 39.
[8] Yt. 15. 7-17, 23-29.
[9] Yt. 15. 19-21.
[10] Yt. 5. 21-66.

them, or that they therefore necessarily originated with Zarathushtra. The fire-cult, for example, is undoubtedly Indo-Iranian, and the fire-priest *āthravan* must have tended the sacred flame at the altar in Iran long before the coming of the prophet. In fact Zarathushtra's ancestors had a ritual in honour of fire in common with the Vedic *āthravan* in their primitive home, long before his forebears migrated to Iran.

Form of sacrifice. The offerings generally made to the heavenly beings consisted of libations, Baresman twigs, and Haoma, for the cult of the divine plant Haoma was shared by the Vedic people in common with the Iranians. Four great persons of this period, Vivahvant, Athwya, Thrita, and Pourushaspa offered the Haoma sacrifice, and each had an illustrious son born unto him as a reward.[11] Haoshyangha, Yima, Thraetaona, and Haosravah sacrificed to Drvaspa, the genius of cattle, a hundred male horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand small cattle, besides the offering of libations.[12]

The Iranians dethrone 'daeva' from the pedestal of divinity. One of the Indo-Iranian epithets for divinity in general is Av. *daeva* (Vedic *deva*), literally meaning the 'shining one.' The word was transplanted with the migratory wave into Iran, and used in a totally derogatory sense as 'demon.' It was metamorphosed from the realm of goodness and light to that of evil and darkness, nor has it ever conveyed the idea of divinity to the Iranian mind, since the term migrated to Iran with the prehistoric folk. It was divested of all its good meaning, and arbitrarily degraded to mean just what it etymologically does not mean. Thus the Indo-Iranian *daevas* became the malignant spirits among the Iranians. Various explanations have been suggested for the cause of this degradation. At all events the fact remains that the Iranian branch for some reason or other avenged itself upon its sister community by branding this cardinal word as evil. The term *daeva* henceforth meant a demon, and the subsequent literature and the languages and dialects derived from Avestan have always used the word to designate demon in general. Once deprived of its good connotation, it has never regained its original true significance. The Indian divinities Indra, Sharva, and Nasatya were removed accordingly from the realm of goodness to that of evil under the names Indra, Saurva,

[11] Ys. 9. 4, 7, 10, 13.

[12] Yt. 9. 3-16, 21-24.

and Naonghaithya. Wicked men, as well as the marauding non-Iranian hordes who devastated the lands of these Aryan settlers of Iran, were dubbed the *daevas,* or demons in human form. The faithful had to repel the frequent inroads of the nomads of Mazana and Varena, or modern Mazandaran and Gilan near the Caspian Sea, who poured down in great numbers and pillaged the possessions of the Iranians. These were the *daevas* in particular with whom the early kings from the time of Haoshyangha had constantly to fight. Takhma Urupi, who offered an unrelenting opposition to idolatry in any form and waged successful wars against such devils, was styled the demon-binder.[13] Sorcery, the delight of the demons, was reprimanded in the sacred texts, and the *yātu,* 'sorcerer,' and the *pairikā,* 'fairy,' were constantly assailed.

[13] *Shah-namah,* tr. Warner, vol. 1, p. 126, London, 1905.

THE GATHIC PERIOD

ABOUT 1000 B.C.

CHAPTER II

ZOROASTRIANISM IN ITS EARLY MISSIONARY STAGE

Zarathushtra gives Mazda's message to mankind. The Later Avestan texts speak of the precursors of Zarathushtra, the prophet of Ancient Iran. In the heavenly world Ahura Mazda taught the divine religion to Sraosha, who is called the teacher of religion to mankind and really is the personification of obedience to religion.[1] The creator imparted his Mazda-worshipping religion to Haoma also.[2] The primeval man, Gaya Maretan, was the first to accept the divine precepts on earth.[3] But Yima the king was the first among mortals whom the Lord asked to be the prophet of his religion.[4] That glorious sovereign, however, pleaded his inability to propagate the faith of Mazda.[5] This great work was reserved for Zarathushtra, who brought Mazda's divine message to mankind centuries later. All creation rejoiced at the prophet's birth and hailed him, at his advent, as the proper person to be the messenger of the Mazda-worshipping religion throughout the seven zones.[6]

Zarathushtra planted his new faith in Iran at a date approximating 1000 B.C., though some learned scholars, basing their arguments on traditional sources, are inclined to assign a date as late as the seventh century B.C., or, to be more exact, 660-583 B.C. The Gathic hymns are the noble utterances of the new religion, and breathe the personal tone of a prophet. The towering individuality of Mazda's messenger is seen moving as a great historic personage in the midst of joys and sorrows, success and failure, now complaining before the Lord on account of the scantiness of his resources, the fewness of his followers, and the opposition of his adversaries, yet again with supreme satisfaction assuring his Heavenly Father of the hopeful outlook of his sacred mission.

[1] Ys. 57. 24; Yt. 11. 1.
[2] Ys. 9. 26.
[3] Yt. 13. 87.
[4] Vd. 2. 1, 2.
[5] Vd. 2. 3.
[6] Yt. 13. 94.

The proselytizing zeal of the crusaders. Success attended the prophetic mission, when Zarathushtra won as a convert Vishtaspa, the king of kings of Iran, together with his royal consort Hutaosa. This was the crowning event in the establishment of Zoroastrianism. Conversions to the new religion followed rapidly as a natural sequel, when it became known that the ruling house of Iran had embraced Zoroaster's faith. Vishtaspa is spoken of in the Later Avestan texts as the very arm and pillar of Zoroastrianism, the defender of the Faith, who gave an impetus to the religion, which until then had experienced only an extremely chequered career, and who made the faith known and renowned throughout the world.[7] With all the zeal and fire characteristic of converts Zarathushtra's followers worked actively for the promulgation of the faith both within and outside of the country. The zealous king headed the list of the crusaders, and Zoroastrianism soon became a church militant. Force and persuasion, the two main factors generally used for the propagation of a religion, were resorted to, until within a short time the creed of Mazda spread far and wide.[8] Zoroastrianism implanted itself not alone among the Iranians that practised the primitive faith, but also among the daeva-worshippers, or accursed followers of demoniacal beliefs, and even among the Turanians, the national rivals of Iran. The prophet immortalizes in his holy hymns the Turanian chieftain Fryana and his family, who came over to his religion.[9] Setting aside the more or less fabulous stories of the conversion of some of the greatest Indian sages and Greek philosophers, we can safely assert that the missionary conquests of the immediate disciples of the prophet were great indeed. The holy wars of the religion against Turan and the neighbouring countries introduced the Avesta and the sacred Fire into distant lands.[10]

Zarathushtra speaks of his faith in terms of a universal religion. The prophet devoutly acknowledges the new religion as having come to him from Mazda, and beseeches the Lord, together with Asha as the genius of righteousness, to let him know their divine will, so that he and his disciples may be

[7] Yt. 13. 99, 100.
[8] Cf. *Shah-namah*, tr. Warner, vol. 5, pp. 72, 76, 77, 85, London, 1910.
[9] Ys. 46. 12.
[10] For the history of this religious propaganda see Jackson, *Zoroaster*, pp. 80-92, New York, 1899.

able the better to teach the religion to man.[11] The prophet is convinced that the religion which his Heavenly Father has commissioned him to preach is the best for all mankind.[12] Ahura Mazda has promised that he will give the riches of beatitude for all time to the devout followers of the new faith.[13] From the very mouth of Mazda the prophet yearns to know the divine truth, in order that he and his adherents may convert all living men to the excellent faith.[14] But the ardent desire of the prophet was not to be fulfilled at the moment, nor to be accomplished in full measure in after ages. Though possessed of all the best elements that fitted it to be a world creed, Zoroastrianism has never shown any signs of becoming a universal religion. In the midst of the vicissitudes of fortune, it has been a national religion at best. Little short of a miracle has saved it from total extinction, and various causes have combined to reduce it to the narrowest limits to-day as the communal religion of a hundred thousand souls. This fact will be brought out more prominently in the treatment of the religious development during the subsequent periods.

[11] Ys. 49. 6.
[12] Ys. 44. 10.
[13] Ys. 53. 1.
[14] Ys. 31. 3.

CHAPTER III

ZOROASTRIANISM IN THE GATHAS

The Gathas, or the Zoroastrian psalms. These metrical hymns, seventeen in number, arranged in five groups, have come to us from Zarathushtra himself. They constitute the oldest and the most hallowed part of the Zoroastrian scriptures. They served probably as the actual texts of the sermons that the prophet himself delivered before the people that pressed from near and from afar to hear him speak.[1] An exalted, buoyant, pithy, and terse spirit characterizes these hymns, which sustain throughout a dignified, cheerful, and abstract tone. The Gathic concept of the godhead surpasses in point of spirituality and individuality all that is known up to that date of the Indo-Iranian divinities. The Amesha Spentas, or Immortal Holy Ones, as the highest abstract impersonations of virtues, are equalled by none in sublime grandeur. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul as preached in the Gathas excels the similar eschatological concept of all ancient peoples, in point of clearness, precision, and logical thoroughness.

The ethics of the Gathas. Zarathushtra teaches that the settled life of the agriculturist is superior to the unsettled living of the nomads, and that peasantry is better than pillage. The Gathas, as embodying the precepts of the prophet, introduce a great reform, a notable advance over anything hitherto known in the field of human ethics. In these hymns is felt the impulse of an onward movement in human morals from collective to personal morality, or from custom to conscience. The crude form of primitive group-ethics is supplanted by a higher type of individual morality. As you sow, so shall you reap, is the Gathic dictum.[2]

The ideal of life that Zoroaster puts forth is not to be reached

[1] Ys. 45. 1; cf. Pischel and Geldner, *Vedische Studien*, 1. 287, Stuttgart, 1889.

[2] Ys. 30. 10, 11; 31. 14, 20; 43. 5; 45. 7; 51. 6, 8, 9.

by ecstasy and meditation in the solitary jungle, but is to be worked out in struggle and suffering in this world. The regeneration of society is ultimately to be brought about from within by the conscious effort of man. On the whole, each and every individual member of the great family of humanity is to provide the practical panacea for the amelioration of the existing condition of society, and each and every individual is obligated to carry on incessantly the work of redeeming the world in pursuance of the divine will. For this purpose it is, that man, as the climax and crown of creation, is created by Ormazd.

The prophet of Iran is not one to advocate the cloistered virtues of the hermit that flees from the temptations of the world, and who lives secure in the place of his retirement, sunk in deep meditation, absorbed in brooding over the abstruse problems of life, and remaining utterly oblivious of the varied experiences of society. True virtue lies not in mere meditation that blights all spontaneity of action; on the contrary, constant struggle with the world to fight the way to victory is man's true method of reaching the goal, rather than flight in the search of liberation. Self-development is a manly virtue, self-effacement is weakness. The practical genius of Iran never embraced the inactive life of the monastery.

The Zoroastrian saint is more a saint in action than in thought. He is the one whose mission for the advancement of the world is to live in society and to minister to the wants and grievances of the less fortunate of mankind. He is not the recluse who assumes the tonsure, dons the ash-coloured robe, and besmears his face. The Zoroastrian saint does not sacrifice for the self-centred self, he sacrifices for others. The ascetic that selfishly seeks his own personal salvation, without contributing his mite to the general uplift of humanity and the regeneration of society, as well as the redemption of the universe, is not so much the beloved of Ormazd as is the active saint who lives in the world of joy and sorrow, without separating himself from the world of activity. The latter develops social and domestic virtues, profits by the variegated experiences of life, strengthens his character, does not merely contemplate righteousness, but carries it into action through dispelling every thought of wickedness from his mind. The true devotee of religion does not withdraw from the company of men in seeking the blessed company of Ormazd.

Saintly life can be led, he knows, even in the midst of the busy world. The best service of God is to be rendered by active service to God's creation. The legitimate joys of this world are not to be stifled; life is pleasant and enjoyable, as has been proved, and living in the midst of the world's joys and sorrows enables one to touch the various chords of human life. In this wholesome view life becomes more full, more complete.

It is not a sound system of philosophy that attaches all possible interest to the next world alone, deriding this, and remaining out of touch with real life. Philosophy must first concern itself with the immediate issues of life. It cannot ignore them. Wrong is done by transferring man's interest completely from this world to the world to come. Such a course of procedure systematically increases human weakness. When every hope is exclusively centred in the world to come, the situation becomes unfavourable to any great material and economical development in the world in which we have our being, and results in the discouragement of social advancement. Religion should foster civic virtues in man. In addition to making mankind holy and righteous, religion should aim at making mankind patriotic and heroic. Zoroaster the realist, the practical common-sense thinker, does not encourage exaggerated unworldliness. Earthly life has a greater value and a deeper significance than the ascetic would acknowledge or believe. The ideal of human perfection has never verged on asceticism in the religion of Iran. Asceticism with its weariness of the earthly life saps civic virtues. The lethargy and inactivity consequent on such a belief are the bane of a society and Zoroaster legislates against them.

To be up and doing is the philosophy of man's real life. Active work, hard labour, strenuous efforts are the virtues—and the paramount virtues. No kind of stigma is attached to labour, but, on the contrary, labour of every description is extolled and sanctified. Agriculture is announced as the most laudable form of work. He who sows the fields that lie fallow, who tills his farms, prunes his vineyards, ploughs the furrows, pastures his flocks, extirpates the noxious creatures that infest the earth, and turns barren deserts into fertile fields as a true labourer, is the one that furthers the cause of Righteousness. Every good work tends to the furtherance of the Kingdom of Righteousness and deals a blow to the Kingdom of Wickedness. It increases the joy

of the angels and cripples the power of the demons. Exertion and not inertia is its watchword. Spiritual virility and not spiritual inactivity is the ideal. Zoroaster teaches these first principles of the advancement of human civilization as religious commandments. Progress and civilization become, thus, a duty for the followers of the ancient Iranian creed.

Zoroastrianism is active, practical, and militant. Humanity is Ahura Mazda's standing army. Man or woman is a perpetual soldier in its doctrinal ranks. Every individual serves in the army in his or her age and place. To further righteousness even by a hair's breadth, or to trample down wickedness however little, are accounted supreme achievements in the existence of the individual. The primeval man was the first to enlist himself as a soldier and enter the battlefield. He sounded the first trumpet and opened the warfare against the Kingdom of Wickedness. The myriads of individuals that have followed him in the aeons of time do incessant battle against the Sovereign of Evil and the personification of imperfection. The last man, who will appear at the end of the cycle of the world to deal the final blow to the tottering Kingdom of Wickedness, will hoist the flag of the final victory of good over evil. The darkness of the night of the Kingdom of Wickedness will then be no more. The sun will never set upon the Kingdom of Righteousness. Such, at least, is the tone that runs through the Gathas.

Phases of the prehistoric Indo-Iranian cult regarding which the Gathas are silent. With the exception of the six celestial ministers of Ahura Mazda and the angels Sraosha, Atar, Ashi, together with a couple of other beings of incipient individuality, the Gathas do not mention, even by name, any of the divinities who become prominent figures in the Later Avestan period. The Younger Avestan texts depict Zarathushtra sacrificing to the Indo-Iranian divinity Haoma.[3] But Haoma is not definitely mentioned by name in the Gathas, though some Western scholars are inclined to take Ys. 32. 14 as containing an allusion to Haoma because of the adjective *duraosha*, 'far from death,' which is his standing epithet. Vayu, or the Wind, is shown in these later passages as exhorting the prophet to invoke him.[4] Yet he does not find a corner on the Gathic stage. There is no reference to the sacred shirt and girdle, the visible symbols

[3] Ys. 9. 16-21. [4] Yt. 15. 49-52.

of every Zoroastrian's orthodox belief. The Gathas make no mention of the Fravashis. The Later Avestan texts, moreover, picture Ahura Mazda as saying that the Fravashis, or guardian angels, stood by him at the beginning of creation, and had it not been for their help, he, the almighty Lord, could not have done many things. We could multiply such instances by the score.

By way of summary, it may be said by the historical student who devoutly believes in Zoroastrianism as his own faith that the Gathas are a collection of short, detached formulas calculated to infuse devotional fervour and moral ardour in man, but in their sacred stanzas the prophet inculcates his fundamental doctrines and ethical principles in a concise and adumbrated form. This abridged form may account for the absence of any ritual in the Gathas, and for their silence regarding many social and religious practices that are interwoven with the daily life of the faithful. Yet such a plea does not explain everything. The omission of much that has been referred to above, and also the absence of the names of Mithra, Verethraghna, and some other Indo-Iranian divinities, who attain in the Later Avestan period to an eminence that eclipses the greatest of the divinities of pure Zoroastrian extraction, are significant indeed, and we shall recur to the question when we come to the Later Avestan period.

CHAPTER IV

AHURA MAZDA

Ahura Mazda is the name of the supreme godhead of Zoroastrianism. We have already mentioned in connection with the history of the name Ahura, in Indo-Iranian times, that the significance of the first element of this compound is 'lord.' The second name, Mazda, is Iranian alone and means 'wisdom.' The word Mazda, as a designation of the divine concept, is supposed to have been in the atmosphere of religious thought as early as a thousand years before the Christian era. Mazdaka, a derivative of Mazda, occurs twice in Median proper names in the Assyrian inscriptions of Sargon as early as 715 B.C. The Assyrian divine name Assara Mazās, which occurs in an inscription of the reign of Assurbanipal purporting to record events in the still more remote past, is further cited as a possible proof that Mazda, the second element of the Zoroastrian name of the godhead, may not have been the creation of Zarathushtra.[1]

The collocation Ahura Mazda means literally 'the Lord Wisdom,' i.e. 'the Wise Lord.' This compound name, which coalesced into the composite form of Auramazda in the time of the Achaemenians, as shown by the Old Persian Inscriptions, and into Ormazd in the Pahlavi and later Persian works, always preserves the separate forms in the ancient Gathic texts. The forms Ahura or Mazda, respectively, or again the combinations Ahura Mazda or Mazda Ahura, as the case may be, are variously used in the Gathas without any distinction, to designate simply the Supreme Being.

Ahura Mazda is the Being par excellence. Ahura Mazda sits at the apex among the celestial beings of Garonmana. He is not begotten, nor is there one like unto him. Beyond him, apart from him, and without him, nothing exists. He is the Supreme Being through whom everything exists. He is brighter than the brightest of creation, higher than the highest heavens, older than

[1] Cf. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, pp. 30, 31, 422-424, London, 1913.

the oldest in the universe. He is the best one.[2] He knows no elder, he has no equal. There is none to dispute his supremacy and contest his place. Nor is there one to struggle successfully with him for the mastery of the heavens. He is the first and foremost. He is the most perfect being. He is changeless.[3] He is the same now and for ever.[4] He was, he is, and he will be the same transcendent being, moving all, yet moved by none. In the midst of the manifold changes wrought by him in the universe, the Lord God remains changeless and unaffected, for he is mighty.[5] He will decide victory between the rival hosts of good and evil.[6] He is the most worthy of invocation,[7] and the first possessor of felicity and joy.[8] There is none before him.[9] He is the greatest of all.[10] He is the only God proper, than whom there is none higher. Everything comes from him and through him. He is the lord of all. Many are his attributes. They are not accidents of his being, as will be shown below, but are his very essence.

Ahura Mazda is a spirit. There is no anthropomorphic trait in the lofty conception of Ahura Mazda, for he is devoid of all human imperfections. He is superhuman. True it is that he is implored to proclaim the truth directly by word of mouth to his prophet,[11] and to speak through the very tongue of his own mouth, so that Zoroaster and his disciples may be the better able to convince mankind of the great truth of his mission.[12] He is also spoken of as distributing good and evil to men by his own hands,[13] and as observing with his eyes all things hidden and open.[14] He lives in the heavenly realm, and wears the firmament as his garment.[15] Zoroaster longs to behold his place, or throne, in heaven,[16] because Ahura Mazda dwells in the straight paths of Righteousness.[17] Expressions like these are symbolical and they are not to be taken literally, since Ahura Mazda, as the whole tone of the Gathas proves, is to be seen or conceived only through the mind's eye. The finite can describe the infinite through finite analogies and similes alone.

Ahura Mazda is the creator. He is the author of the

[2] Ys. 28. 8.
[3] Ys. 45. 10.
[4] Ys. 31. 7.
[5] Ys. 43. 4.
[6] Ys. 44. 15.
[7] Ys. 46. 9.
[8] Ys. 29. 10.
[9] Ys. 28. 3.
[10] Ys. 45. 6.
[11] Ys. 28. 11.
[12] Ys. 31. 3.
[13] Ys. 43. 4.
[14] Ys. 31. 13.
[15] Ys. 30. 5.
[16] Ys. 28. 5.
[17] Ys. 33. 5.

celestial and terrestrial worlds, the creator of the universe.[18] He was the first to conceive the thought to fill his heavenly realm with light.[19] He guards the earth and sky from falling, he has brought forth rivers and forests, he has given swiftness to wind and clouds. The sun and the stars have their course fixed by him, while light and darkness, sleep and wakefulness, morn and noon and night, come from him alone, and through him does the moon wax and wane.[20] The seasons follow their ordained sequence through his will. He is the father of Vohu Manah, Good Mind,[21] and of Asha, Righteousness,[22] of whom he is the creator.[23] He is one in accord with Asha, being himself righteousness. Armaiti, Devotion, is his daughter,[24] and she is wholly his,[25] and he is the Being Supreme that has brought forth both Armaiti and Khshathra, the Kingdom.[26] He has brought into being the human body and endowed it with life and conscience;[27] he has created likewise the water and the trees.[28] He has lavished his bountiful gifts upon humanity, being himself the most beneficent of all beings.[29] Humanity looks to him for the unceasing benefits that come to them, as he is the dispenser of every material good and every spiritual blessing. The entire creation sings to his glory, and the world of righteousness, with one accord, praises him as its father and lord, while even the world of wickedness, which has been led astray by falsehood, will ultimately come over to him and seek his grace. As the creator and sustainer of the universe, he rules according to his own will,[30] being the sovereign lord of all existence.[31]

Ahura Mazda is the lord of wisdom. He is the wise one,[32] and the father of wisdom. He is the most knowing one,[33] and the most far-seeing one.[34] He knows everything before it comes to pass; and his knowledge is unfailing and absolute, so that no one can deceive him.[35] He observes with his radiant eyes everything that is done in open or in secret.[36] He best remembers

[18] Ys. 50. 11.
[19] Ys. 31. 7.
[20] Ys. 44. 3-5.
[21] Ys. 31. 8; 44. 4; 45. 4.
[22] Ys. 44. 3; 47. 2.
[23] Ys. 31. 7, 8.
[24] Ys. 45. 4.
[25] Ys. 31. 9.
[26] Ys. 44. 7.
[27] Ys. 31. 11.
[28] Ys. 51. 7.
[29] Ys. 28. 5; 33. 11; 48. 3.
[30] Ys. 43. 1.
[31] Ys. 28. 7.
[32] Ys. 29. 6; 45. 3; 48. 2, 3.
[33] Ys. 46. 19.
[34] Ys. 33. 13.
[35] Ys. 43. 6; 45. 4.
[36] Ys. 31. 13.

the misdeeds of the wicked.[37] These are ignorant of what is to befall them in the future, but Ahura Mazda remembers and knows it.[38] Zarathushtra asks Ahura Mazda to tell him, in his infinite wisdom, of what is to be and what is not to be—for the Lord knows everything[39]—so that, forewarned of future events, he may prepare himself for his great mission.

Zarathushtra seeks communion with Ahura Mazda, and finds it. The prophet's heart flows out in deep piety to his Heavenly Father. He thirsts for the moment when he can see Ahura Mazda in his mind's eye and commune with him to get direct information about his work for the spread of the new faith. Ahura Mazda is fervently prayed to approach him manifestly in person,[40] in order that the prophet may convince the sceptics of the truth of his undertaking and that the pious-minded may listen devoutly to his teachings. The Lord is the fountain of holiness,[41] and Zoroaster yearns to bathe in the sanctifying waters of this fountain. He seeks to approach Ahura Mazda with his mind thus illumined by wisdom and his heart ennobled by holiness. Is the approach to the Father in heaven possible? Will the prophet's passionate desire to reach him and be near him and around him and serve him with all his mind and all his heart ever be fulfilled? Will his desire to see the Heavenly Father in spirit and converse with him ever be satisfied? If he is to be the messenger of Ahura Mazda to struggling humanity, Ahura Mazda should reveal the true word to him in person. On that account he must approach him and acquaint himself through the direct questions put to the godhead about the why and whence and wherefore of life, for Ahura Mazda is the first teacher of the devout.[42] The prophet yearns to be acquainted with the law and will, the praise and prayer of Ahura Mazda, as also to know the beneficent path of Vohu Manah, Good Mind.[43] He has not to wait long for the fulfilment of this ardent wish. When his spirit is ablaze with unquenchable devotion, when the ardent longing for Ahura Mazda swallows up every other desire, Vohu Manah, the embodiment of the good mind, the first in the spiritual hierarchy, comes to him,[44] and the prophet

[37] Ys. 29. 4.
[38] Ys. 32. 6, 7.
[39] Ys. 31. 5.
[40] Ys. 33. 7.
[41] Ys. 43. 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15; 48. 3.
[42] Ys. 51. 3.
[43] Ys. 34. 12.
[44] Ys. 43. 11, 13.

is assured of his success, for it is through Vohu Manah that he can realize his wish, and through him he can approach the great Master.[45] Vohu Manah, aided by Sraosha, the divine messenger, reveals the sacred word of Mazda unto him, and the prophet, who at last has had the spiritual vision of Ahura Mazda, says that he has beheld him in his eye.[46]

Ahura Mazda is the refuge of Zarathushtra in his trials. Girt with the divine wisdom, Zarathushtra undertakes to preach the profound truth vouchsafed him by Ahura Mazda. He is prepared to make any sacrifice in behalf of the great and momentous cause; he is ready even to give up the very life of his body in the service of Mazda.[47]

Zarathushtra craves for long life from Ahura Mazda,[48] so that he may be able to propagate the new faith. He undertakes to spread the worship of Ahura Mazda and seeks the divine help and guidance in the great mission that he has undertaken. The prophet's path is beset with great difficulties. He meets with opposition everywhere. He complains that the heretics mislead people, and he implores Ahura Mazda for divine help to enable him to succeed in routing these wicked preachers of the Evil Word.[49] Neither do friends countenance him, nor kinsmen heed him, nor yet do the rulers help him. Persecuted and ridiculed, devoid of any means, the sage wanders from one place to another quite alone. In this hour of sorrow he turns his eyes streaming with tears to his Heavenly Father with the touching words: 'To what land shall I turn, whither shall I go?'[50] He beseeches Ahura Mazda to come down to him, in this time of trouble, with his divine gifts,[51] and grant him joy and such help as a powerful friend would bestow upon a friend.[52] His prayers are heard. Though his earthly friends and relatives had forsaken him, the prophet was not alone. His Heavenly Father had been with him all this while, and he now feels himself no longer resourceless and helpless. If earthly possessions fail him, he is rich in spiritual riches.

Ahura Mazda has ordained that virtue is its own reward, and vice its own retribution. This is the great commandment that Mazda gives to mankind through his messenger. Every

[45] Ys. 28. 2.
[46] Ys. 31. 8; 45. 8.
[47] Ys. 33. 14.
[48] Ys. 43. 13.
[49] Ys. 32. 9.
[50] Ys. 46. 1.
[51] Ys. 49. 1.
[52] Ys. 43. 14; 46. 2.

individual is to reap the consequences of his own thoughts, words, and deeds. Zarathushtra exhorts men and women to make their own choice between good and evil, for every one has to decide his own faith,[53] and the prophet emphasizes again the fact of individual responsibility. Man has to exercise his freedom of the will, as it is left to him to decide whether to embrace goodness, and be happy, or to follow the path of wickedness which will inevitably lead him to a life of woe.

Mazda has ordained laws for the recompense of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked in the world to come,[54] and has given precepts in accordance with which mankind should live.[55] In his communion with the Supreme Being, the prophet desires to be informed regarding these vital points,[56] and the Lord vouchsafes this knowledge to him and thus to humanity. Those who live in this world in conformity with the divine message, reap future reward; but those who choose to live in defiance of it, bring future trouble upon themselves, for both weal and woe come from him.[57] Unto those who do his will he gives better than the good, but he metes out worse than the evil to those who act against it.[58] He is the lord to judge the deeds of life,[59] and he passes his verdict on them.[60] Strict are his laws and stern is his judgment. Yet he is not the indiscriminate dispenser of doom to erring humanity. His is the justice tempered with mercy, for mercy and grace abound in his divine kingdom.[61]

The Holy Spirit of Ahura Mazda. The most prominent one of the titles of Ahura Mazda, and one which comes very near being personified as an independent spirit, is Spenta Mainyu, the 'Holy Spirit.' The term is sometimes used in its superlative forms, either as Spentotema Mainyu or as Spenishta Mainyu, meaning the 'Most Holy Spirit.' As Mazda's distinguishing epithet, the Holy Spirit generally designates the Supreme Being. But in some cases we find a distinction made between Mazda and the Holy Spirit, as if they were two distinctly separate beings. As Professor Jackson well remarks, the close relation between Ahura Mazda and his Holy Spirit is as difficult to define as that between the Holy Ghost and the Father in

[53] Ys. 30. 2.
[54] Ys. 45. 7.
[55] Ys. 30. 11.
[56] Ys. 31. 14.
[57] Ys. 45. 9.
[58] Ys. 51. 6.
[59] Ys. 31. 8.
[60] Ys. 29. 4.
[61] Ys. 51. 4.

the New Testament.[62] Ahura Mazda is besought to grant strength and good reward, and vigour and happiness through his Most Holy Spirit.[63] Zarathushtra chooses Mazda's Most Holy Spirit.[64] Mazda is the creator of all things through his Holy Spirit.[65] The good works of the Holy Spirit of Mazda are besought with prayer.[66] Zarathushtra proclaims what Spentotema, the Most Holy One, has said unto him,[67] and desires that Ahura Mazda may listen to him through the Holy Spirit.[68] It is through the Holy Spirit that Ahura Mazda has promised to the righteous all that is best;[69] and it is also owing to him that the wicked, and not the righteous, suffer.[70] Ahura Mazda, through his Holy Spirit, judges between the litigants at the final dispensation.[71] Zarathushtra fulfils the best work of the Most Holy Spirit through the words of Good Mind and the deeds of Devotion.[72] At the time of the Renovation of the universe, Mazda will come with his Holy Spirit,[73] and through him give perfection and immortality to man.[74]

When Zarathushtra expounds his famous doctrine of the duality of the primeval spirits, the name of Ahura Mazda, the great God of Goodness, is replaced by his appellative, Spenta Mainyu, 'Holy Spirit,' who is placed in direct antagonism to Angra Mainyu, 'Evil Spirit.' These two spirits are called twins and represent the good and evil aspects of existence respectively.[75] Life is the boon of the Holy Spirit,[76] who gives his adversary, the Evil Spirit, to understand that he is opposed to him in his thoughts, precepts, understanding, faith, words, deeds, self, soul, and all.[77] The Most Holy Spirit, who lives in yonder heaven, chose righteousness, but the Evil One embraced wickedness.[78]

[62] Cf. his article 'Ormazd, or the Ancient Persian Idea of God,' in *The Monist*, Chicago, January, 1899.

[63] Ys. 33. 12; 43. 2; 51. 7.
[64] Ys. 43. 16.
[65] Ys. 44. 7.
[66] Ys. 28. 1.
[67] Ys. 45. 5.
[68] Ys. 45. 6.
[69] Ys. 47. 5.
[70] Ys. 47. 4.
[71] Ys. 47. 6.
[72] Ys. 47. 2.
[73] Ys. 43. 6.
[74] Ys. 47. 1.
[75] Ys. 30. 3.
[76] Ys. 30. 4.
[77] Ys. 45. 2.
[78] Ys. 30. 5.

CHAPTER V

MAZDA'S MINISTERING ANGELS

Amesha Spentas in the making. A class of higher celestial beings working with Ahura Mazda as his satellites, and comparable with the idea conveyed by such terms as archangels or ministering angels, fills a prominent place in the Iranian faith. Their names connote the ordinary meaning of the terms involved or else are used as abstractions of highly ethical conceptions, personified into concrete beings. They do not receive their designations from any natural phenomena, but are purely the personifications of abstract virtues. The term Amesha Spenta, literally meaning 'Immortal Holy One,' which is applied in the later texts as a class-designation for this group of Mazda's associates, does not itself occur in the Gathas, though these divine abstractions are constantly mentioned individually and collectively in the Gathic hymns in direct association with Mazda. We find in the Gathas, however, two instances of the use of the appellative terms *Mazdāo(schā) Ahurāongho,* 'Ahura Mazda and his associates,'[1] as alluding to the supreme God and his ministering angels. The Amesha Spentas are six in number, and with Ahura Mazda at their head they form a heptad. The Gathas in referring to this class of archangels do not happen to mention the number seven, but the subsequent literature generally speaks of them definitely as seven, a number to which mystical potency is attributed.

Their names, throughout all the Avestan literature, are Vohu Manah, 'Good Mind,' Asha, 'Righteousness,' Khshathra Vairya, 'Wished-for Kingdom,' Armaiti, 'Devotion,' Haurvatat, 'Perfection,' and Ameretat, 'Immortality.' Each of them is to be met with in the Gathas both separately as well as in company with one or others of the group, and has various functions to perform. They all, moreover, have work of a twofold character

[1] Ys. 30. 9; 31. 4.

to fulfil, for each stands on the spiritual side as an embodiment of some specific virtue and on the physical side presides over some material object as its guardian spirit. To each of them, accordingly, beside the spiritual element some material creation is consecrated. While the physical aspect is more pronounced in the later texts, the Gathas deal mainly with the abstract side, though occasionally stray passages are met with which foreshadow the material side. We shall now deal with these higher beings individually.

Vohu Manah

The premier spirit in the divine household. Vohu Manah, 'Good Mind,' or Vahishta Manah, 'Best Mind,' as he is frequently spoken of in the Gathas, is the first in the creation of the Good Spirit. The prophet conceives him in his mind as the son of Ahura Mazda.[2] He occupies the first place in the celestial hierarchy, and wields great power. It is through him that Zarathushtra with hands uplifted in pious supplication longs to approach Ahura Mazda.[3] The Lord God teaches through righteousness the noble path of Vohu Manah, which is the religion of the saviours.[4] The wise firmly resolve to embrace the deeds of Good Mind.[5] Righteousness and Devotion further the dominion of Vohu Manah.[6] The righteous will dwell in the abode of Good Mind in the next world.[7]

Genius of high thinking and wisdom. The illumination of the human mind comes through Vohu Manah, and Zarathushtra implores Mazda to be his revealer.[8] He longs for the moment when, being enlightened and inspired, he may behold Vohu Manah.[9] The sage has not to wait for the realization of his ardent desire, for Vohu Manah approaches him with divine knowledge,[10] and asks of him his heart's longing.[11] As the presiding spirit over good thoughts and wisdom, Vohu Manah works in a twofold way in the inner life of man. Good thoughts proceed from him, and good words and good deeds are but the products of these. Man experiences an incessant war waged in his inner world between the good thoughts of Vohu Manah

[2] Ys. 31. 8; 45. 4.
[3] Ys. 28. 2.
[4] Ys. 34. 12, 13.
[5] Ys. 34. 10.
[6] Ys. 34. 11.
[7] Ys. 30. 10.
[8] Ys. 31. 17.
[9] Ys. 28. 5.
[10] Ys. 43. 11.
[11] Ys. 43. 7, 9, 13, 15.

and the evil thoughts of Aka Manah. The law of polarity, which works in the world without, works also in the world within. The soul is not to remain a passive spectator between these opposite sides of mental activity; it has to embrace the first and to learn to control and rout the other. It has to guard itself from falling an easy prey to the mischievous machinations of the source of evil thoughts. Unless man by strict discipline learns to preserve the equilibrium between these contending forces, he cannot attain to that mental calm and peace which is essential for the higher life of the spirit.

Along with nobility of mind Vohu Manah imparts enlightenment also. He helps man to dispel the darkness of ignorance and its concomitant vices. Knowledge or wisdom, the coveted boon that man seeks to obtain, is a means for his righteous actions. The truly righteous person is not he who knows the divine precepts, but he who lives them. Knowledge is good, but action based on that knowledge is better. The life of greater felicity is the reward of the doer, rather than the thinker, in the world to come.

Zarathushtra exhorts his followers to seek Vohu Manah's grace. Through his union with the spirit of Good Mind, Zarathushtra says that he will teach mankind to follow the path of righteousness as long as he has strength left in him.[12] The prophet is beloved of Vohu Manah, who declares him to be the only man who has devoutly heard the divine precepts.[13] Zarathushtra celebrates Vohu Manah with song, and prays that this personified spirit of goodness may come unto him for help.[14] Just as the noxious creatures flee from man, so does righteousness flee from the man who in spite of Vohu Manah's warnings indulges in wickedness;[15] and that man who does not embrace righteousness finds himself deserted by Vohu Manah.[16] Those that have revolted from Vohu Manah are called the beloved of the demons.[17] Zoroaster complains of those who do not seek Vohu Manah's counsel.[18] They incite the righteous ones to deviate from the path of Vohu Manah, being unaware of the great harm that they thus bring upon themselves.[19] These sinners will eventually see their error at the time when retribution

[12] Ys. 28. 4.
[13] Ys. 29. 8.
[14] Ys. 28. 3.
[15] Ys. 34. 9.
[16] Ys. 34. 8.
[17] Ys. 32. 4.
[18] Ys. 44. 13.
[19] Ys. 32. 11.

will reach them, and Vohu Manah shall establish the Divine Kingdom at the command of Mazda.[20]

Vohu Manah's boons. Asha is besought to grant Vohu Manah's blessings.[21] Mazda has promised that perfection and immortality will come through Good Mind.[22] It is he that furthers the possessions of those who please the prophet of Mazda.[23] In his difficulties Zoroaster asks for Vohu Manah's riches,[24] and for chieftainship through him.[25] Those who are devoted to Ahura receive power and supremacy through the medium of Vohu Manah.[26] It is easy, therefore, for us to understand why Zoroaster asks him to grant power unto his disciples,[27] and why he demands from Asha the excellence of Vohu Manah,[28] beseeching Ahura Mazda to grant Vohu Manah's reward especially to the pious Frashaoshtra and himself.[29] This reward is an incomparable blessing.[30] The Supreme Being is further asked to grant the wishes of those who are worthy of Vohu Manah's reward owing to their righteousness.[31] Mazda bestows the blessings of Good Mind upon man.[32] Whoso befriends Mazda receives Vohu Manah's steadfastness from him.[33] Armaiti, or devotion personified, is implored by the supplicant to grant the life with Vohu Manah, which is the equivalent of divine felicity forever.[34]

Vohu Manah as the genius of cattle. In the later development of the Zoroastrian theology Vohu Manah's function as the patron divinity of cattle comes out prominently. The Gathas do not explicitly speak of Vohu Manah's work in the animal kingdom, though instances could be cited which lead us to believe that the archangel was even then thought to have the guardianship of the cattle as his special province. When Geush Urvan, the genius representing animal life, seeks a redress of the wrongs which the kine have to suffer upon earth, Vohu Manah declares Zarathushtra as the one man who by his teachings of industrial life to men will inaugurate an era of prosperity for animal life as well as for man.[35] The diligent husbandman who grows fodder for cattle is the promoter of Vohu Manah.[36] Still

[20] Ys. 30. 8.
[21] Ys. 28. 7.
[22] Ys. 45. 10.
[23] Ys. 46. 13.
[24] Ys. 46. 2.
[25] Ys. 49. 3.
[26] Ys. 33. 12; 44. 6.
[27] Ys. 29. 10.
[28] Ys. 28. 7.
[29] Ys. 28. 8.
[30] Ys. 33. 13.
[31] Ys. 28. 10.
[32] Ys. 43. 2.
[33] Ys. 31. 21.
[34] Ys. 43. 1.
[35] Ys. 29. 7, 8.
[36] Ys. 31. 10.

another Gathic passage incidentally mentions cattle in connection with Vohu Manah.[37]

Asha

The impersonation of righteousness. The basic concept of this spiritual being goes far back to the Indo-Iranian period. The name *asha,* as it is generally now pronounced, must certainly have been pronounced in ancient times as *arta* or *areta,* the latter variant being also found, and it is equivalent to the Vedic *rta.* The Gathas, as also the Later Avestan works generally, write the term as *asha,* whereas the Old Persian Inscriptions use the term *arta* as an element of proper names. During the Pahlavi period both the *asha* and the *arta* forms are variously used.

The term *asha* ordinarily connotes the meaning righteousness. When personified, the word stands as the proper name of the genius of righteousness. The epithet *vahishta,* 'best,' is occasionally attached to him. The place accorded him in the Gathas is the third after Ahura Mazda.

Zarathushtra is singled out to communicate the Law of Righteousness to humanity. This divine law is more immutable than the earth below and the heavens above. Ahura Mazda has established it. It has flourished in the world of spirits from all eternity, and the Lord now seeks to implant it in the hearts of men. For that reason Zoroaster is chosen as the best and the worthiest person to be the law-giver to mankind. No one else besides him is considered worthy of this mighty work. Vohu Manah declares that Zarathushtra alone has heard the divine commandments and has undertaken to make them known to mankind.[38] In pious submission to the divine command, Zoroaster undertakes to establish the Law of Righteousness on earth.

The prophet guides mankind to Asha's righteousness. Ahura Mazda is the father of Asha.[39] He has created this embodiment of righteousness through his divine wisdom,[40] and is of one will with him.[41] Mazda is the ever helping friend of those who befriend Asha. Zoroaster implores him to grant strength to his disciples,[42] and through Asha the blessings of Vohu Manah for both worlds.[43] The prophet longs for a vision

[37] Ys. 47. 3.
[38] Ys. 29. 8.
[39] Ys. 47. 2.
[40] Ys. 31. 8.
[41] Ys. 28. 8; 29. 7.
[42] Ys. 29. 10.
[43] Ys. 28. 2, 7; 43. 2.

of Asha.[44] Life led in accordance with Asha makes one resemble Mazda.[45] Asha co-operates with the godhead at the final dispensation.[46] Zoroaster best exemplifies Asha's virtues in his noble life. Undaunted by hardships and trials he proclaims the law of righteousness to the world. When this great prophetic work is beset with untold difficulties; when the prophet of Ahura faces opposition on all sides; when friends desert his company, and kinsmen abandon his cause; when the rulers of the land look upon him with suspicions, and the wicked seek to compass his ruin; when, friendless and forsaken, hissed and hooted, ridiculed and persecuted, he roams about the villages and towns of Iran—then he turns his eager eyes to Mazda and Asha in search for inward peace, and obtains it.[47] Reduced to the verge of the direst poverty, Zarathushtra does not seek earthly riches, but the imperishable wealth of the spirit, that is, righteousness.

Zoroaster fervently hopes for the period when every individual in his or her own capacity will embrace and act righteousness and will thus make the entire world of humanity gravitate towards Asha. In this consists the final victory of good over evil, and the divine kingdom of Ahura Mazda will come when righteousness wholly pervades the universe. All, therefore, have to contribute to this mighty work. The righteous ones living in different ages and at different places form the members of one holy group, inasmuch as they are all actuated by one and the same motive and work for the common cause. Though differentiated by time and place, as also by their respective tenements of clay, they are one in spirit, and work for the inauguration of the Kingdom of Righteousness.

Righteousness is the pivot around which the ethics of Zarathushtra revolve. Asha is the highest word in the Zoroastrian terminology, and its derivative *ashavan* forms the epithet of the man who is most saintly and possesses the noblest character. The term itself is applied to Ahura Mazda, to Zarathushtra, and to all who are religious. Righteousness is the will of Ahura Mazda; it is the rule of man's duty, and to be righteous is synonymous with being religious. The law of righteousness is the norm to which the faithful has to conform his life

[44] Ys. 28. 5; 43. 10. [46] Ys. 47. 6. [47] Ys. 28. 6.
[45] Ys. 31. 16.

in this world. Good thoughts, good words, and good deeds—*humata, hukhta, hvarshta*—form the ethical foundation upon which righteousness rests and the basis upon which the entire structure of the system of the Mazdayasnian philosophy is reared. This noble truth, at once so pithy and simple, is accessible to all. It does not appeal to the intellectual few and leave aside the ignorant many; nor does it remain the prerogative of a few thinkers and philosophers; but it can reach all and become the cherished possession of the prince and peasant alike. Every Zoroastrian child imbibes the triad of good thoughts, words, and deeds at its mother's breast.

The discipline of the individual in righteousness. The prophet inculcates righteousness in his teachings, and strictly enjoins his followers to combat wickedness. By his birthright man belongs to the world of righteousness and is sent into this world for its furtherance and for the destruction of the world of wickedness. Before the individual steps out to do this in the outer world, he has first to establish order in his inner world. Concord and not discord, order and not disorder, righteousness and not wickedness, should be his constant inward experience. With strict discipline he has to work for the spiritual development of his self. He is taught to subjugate his passions, eradicate evil thoughts from his mind, and conquer the animal in him by an incessant warfare with the forces of evil. The path of righteousness leads to the abode of Mazda,[48] in which Asha dwells with other celestial beings of the heaven.[49] But the path is not without its difficulties and trials; firm resolution, strong will, and sustained effort are required before one can successfully tread it and reach the final goal. It needs no effort to be wicked and to be a passive victim of the flesh, but it does take a hero to be righteous and live for the spirit. There are tempting pitfalls and alluring snares that beguile the devotee and lead him astray to the path of wickedness. The quest is fraught with great difficulties. But then the prize it brings is also matchless. The goal is not easy of reach. Many more are the chances of misses than those of hits, and the aspirant has to try again and again before he can successfully strike the mark. Our attempt may prove fruitless for the time being, but there is merit in

[48] Ys. 33. 5. [49] Ys. 30. 10.

having aimed at realizing the ideal. If we win, it is good. If we lose, it is also good.

Man has to keep himself pure and clean bodily, mentally, and spiritually. Purity of body and mind is the best thing for man in life.[50] It strengthens righteousness and sanctity. The blending of the virtues of Vohu Manah and Armaiti in the life of man makes him righteous. The fusion of the noble qualities both of the head and the heart makes the individual righteous. Vohu Manah purifies the mind, Armaiti sanctifies the heart. Vohu Manah's knowledge enlightens the mind, Armaiti's devotion ennobles it. Without knowledge man is poor indeed, but without devotion he courts death in spirit. Knowledge teaches the spirit, the philosophy of life, devotion lends to the spirit the zest to act it, and the true religion begins with this acting. The philosopher may think of Ahura Mazda, the metaphysician may speculate about his origin, but the devout actually imitates him in action. Knowledge gives a right view of life, teaches man about his relations to his Heavenly Father and the universe, and creates ideals for him; but devotion strives to realize these. Knowledge is good, wisdom is better; but wisdom tinged with devotion is best. The wise knows Mazda, the devout owns Mazda; and the blending of the virtues of both makes man the consummate one, the saint, the *ashavan*, or righteous one.

To further righteousness is only half the duty; to combat wickedness is the other half. There is yet another and nobler side of virtue in which the active rather than the passive virtues predominate and guide the actions of life. In this higher sphere of life man is now taught to go out from within himself and do active work for others. The truly righteous person does not live for himself alone, but holds out his own life for the ransom of others. Man may not rest with working for the salvation of his individual soul; he has equally to strive for the saving of the collective soul, the soul of all humanity. Every year that he lives in this world he has to render some distinct social service and further the sum total of human joy and happiness; every day that he enjoys the infinite blessings of Ahura Mazda he has to give his mite in the furtherance of the cause of goodness. Human society is a great family, and no single member can live by himself. No act of the individual can be so personal that it does

[50] Ys. 48. 5.

not affect other members of the group or influence them in some way or other. Every one has to work for all. The individual is an important incident in society, a dutiful member of the world of humanity if he works for it; but an undesirable burden and a superfluous impediment to society if he selfishly lives only for himself.

When one works for the good of others and lays his services at the door of society, one becomes richer in spirit. The spirit gains when she goes out from within and is prepared to lose herself for the common good, but loses when she is confined to the narrow limits of herself. There is nothing nobler for her than the virtue of self-sacrifice. The righteous sages have attained to greatness because they were meek enough in spirit and humble enough in heart to be humanity's willing servants. These spread goodness around them and become the means of happiness to others. And real happiness in turn comes to those who thus make others happy.[51]

Various, as we know, are the motives which serve men as incentives in their work. Some work for the applause of their fellow-beings, some for posthumous name and fame, while still others do some good work in the hope of some reward in this or the next world. If a man abstains from evil it may be owing to the dread of public censure or to the fear of incurring the divine vengeance and future retribution; but the truly righteous one practises righteousness for its own sake. As the patriot who is guided by the noblest of human sentiments lives and dies for his country, so the *ashavan* acts in promoting the divine Kingdom of Righteousness.

Just as the individual's duty ends not in practising passive virtues which tend to make him good, but in making others good, so also he must not rest when he has eradicated his evil thoughts, bridled his passions, and overcome the evil that lurks in his inward nature, but he has further to reclaim others who have embraced wickedness. It is not only passive resistance that he has to offer to evil, but adopting an aggressive attitude towards evil of all kinds, he has to combat and rout it. It is not enough that he should himself eschew evil; he must combat evil in others. He cannot remain a passive spectator while his neighbour is suffering. He is not to be a passive onlooker of, or to connive

[51] Ys. 43. 1.

at some wrong on the ground that he is not the originator of it. The fact that something evil and imperfect exists around him, no matter by whom caused, is a sufficient reason why he should rush into the fray and do his share to mitigate and remove it. Nay, he has even to hunt out the hydra of wrong and strike at its many heads, so that the world of righteousness may not suffer.

The prophet of Iran warns man that happiness is not the criterion of the value of human life, pleasure is not the standard; but duty in its twofold aspect, that is, of working for righteousness and fighting against wickedness, is the guiding principle of life. Incessant work for the Kingdom of Righteousness deepens man's life; uncompromising war against the Kingdom of Wickedness strengthens it. This twofold activity makes life complete. To further righteousness is, moreover, only half the duty; to combat wickedness is the other half. Both are indispensable to realize the Zoroastrian ideal of righteousness.

On the material side fire is consecrated to Asha. Zoroastrianism centres in the fire as its most sacred emblem. We shall deal more fully with this characteristic feature of Zarathushtra's religion below under the separate heading of Atar, the genius of fire. In this place we shall confine ourselves simply to referring to Asha's relation to fire from the moral point of view. Fire or light is taken as the most sacred emblem of purity and serves as a visible symbol of Asha's righteousness, and the presence of fire is, therefore, desired through Asha.[52] Zarathushtra meditates upon righteousness at the moment of giving an offering of homage unto the fire of Ahura Mazda.[53] Here the prophet's action reminds the faithful Zoroastrian, who wends his way towards the fire-temple, that the real motive of carrying an offering to Asha's earthly symbol is that the act should make him think of Asha's spiritual virtue. Homage to the concrete element should suggest to him the abstract idea of righteousness. If the offering does not produce this psychological effect it is of no avail. If the devout believer in Mazda, while offering the material object unto fire, is not affected in spirit, and if the act of burning fragrant incense on the fire does not produce virtuous and noble thoughts in his mind; or again, if while sacrificing some earthly goods at the altar of the Lord, he is not inspired to sacrifice his heart, if he does not

[52] Ys. 34. 4. [53] Ys. 43. 9.

return from the sacred precincts meek in spirit, contrite of heart, and if the shrill ring of the bell in the holy of holies tinkles in vain, failing to strike a chord of pious emotion, then his offerings of the handfuls of sandalwood and cart-loads of fuel are of no consequence.

Khshathra

The Divine Kingdom of Ahura Mazda. Khshathra, 'the Kingdom,' or Vohu Khshathra, 'the Good Kingdom,' or Khshathra Ishtoish, 'the Kingdom of Desire,' or Khshathra Vairya, 'the Wished-for Kingdom,' are terms standing for the divine majesty, the sovereign power of Ahura Mazda. Unlike his predecessors who take an active part in the struggle between the righteous and the wicked creations, Khshathra represents a state or a condition brought about in the world by the work of man. In him lies the realization of the object of creation. The progress and evolution of the universe have for their main ideal the establishment of the Divine Kingdom on earth. This is the goal which will be reached when good shall vanquish evil, the law of righteousness be established, and the powers of wickedness be routed forever. True it is that Ahura Mazda is the sovereign of the universe from before the beginning of time, but his rule is hampered by Angra Mainyu. Humanity co-operates with the godhead to put down the wicked spirit, to remove the imperfection, and to inaugurate the kingdom in which the will of the Lord shall reign supreme and the dissenting voice of the opponent spirit shall be heard no more. By teaching mankind the virtue of pious obedience to the religion of Mazda, Zarathushtra lays the foundation of the Divine Kingdom.[54] The kingdom of Khshathra Vairya is expressly that of Ahura Mazda, but Vohu Manah is to be the great factor in establishing and advancing it.[55] Truly, when Vohu Manah has a sway over the minds of men and women, the lives they lead will be in accordance with the will of Mazda. Asha helps him who does what is right to attain to Khshathra Vairya's Good Kingdom.[56]

The pious pray for their share of enjoyment in the Good Kingdom of Mazda. Participation in the celestial possession is the ardent wish of the devout,[57] and Zarathushtra praises it

[54] Ys. 33. 14.
[55] Ys. 30. 8; 31. 6.
[56] Ys. 51. 1.
[57] Ys. 51. 2.

and sings to the glory of Ahura Mazda in asking for himself the riches and the incomparable things of the Divine Kingdom.[58]

While on the spiritual side Khshathra Vairya stands for the celestial riches of the Divine Kingdom of Ahura Mazda, which is to come, this archangel typifies on the material side the earthly riches embodied in the mineral world. Khshathra Vairya, therefore, is entrusted with the guardianship of metals. The final manifestation of the divine majesty, or the coming of Khshathra Vairya's wished-for Kingdom will be attended by the ordeal of molten metal. Mazda will give his reward unto the righteous and retribution unto the wicked by bringing about the division between them through the instrumentality of the fiery metals.[59] This refers to the flood of molten metal, described in the texts of the later periods, through which the good and evil will be made to pass at the final dispensation.[60]

Armaiti

The personified female abstraction of devotion. Armaiti, like Aramati, her counterpart in the Vedas, stands for the spirit of devotion. The attribute *spenta,* 'holy,' is the epithet sometimes prefixed to her name in the Gathas. During the Later Avestan period this title becomes an indispensable part of the name of the divine qualities she embodies.

Armaiti gives the infallible ordinances of Ahura Mazda.[61] She is the daughter of the Deity,[62] and it is with their conjoined help that man can aspire to reach the final goal of being God-like. The realization of the wisdom of Vohu Manah and the devotion of Armaiti help man in like manner to attain to the ideal state of righteousness. If it is Vohu Manah that cleanses man's mind from all evil thoughts and enlightens it, it is Armaiti that sanctifies his heart, and sanctity is paramount for man from his birth.[63] Zarathushtra insists upon the fact that it is with the help of the virtues both of the head and of the heart, as we have already seen, that the soul can steer its bark safely in the ocean

[58] Ys. 33. 13; 43. 8.
[59] Ys. 30. 7; 32. 7; 51. 9.
[60] See Jackson, *On Avestan ayokhshusta 'molten metal.' ayah, and its significance in the Gathas, in* JAOS. 15. *Proceedings,* lviii-lxi.
[61] Ys. 43. 6.
[62] Ys. 45. 4.
[63] Ys. 48. 5.

of life, and reach its destined place, for Armaiti is Ahura Mazda's own.[64] She is the Lord's beloved; she inquires after the misdeeds even of the true as well as the false, and the shortcomings of the wise and the ignorant.[65] Whoso, knowing this fact, still continues perversely to associate with evil and estrange himself from devotion, finds himself deserted by righteousness.[66] The wise man does not fall into this error. He takes Armaiti to be the comrade of righteousness,[67] and develops the devotional side of his character. Zarathushtra prays her to instruct men's conscience through righteousness.[68] Armaiti, consequently is implored to grant the might and power that may enable man to uphold righteousness, and to bestow the riches of Ashi together with the life of Vohu Manah.[69] She it is that furthers righteousness.[70] She is asked to send good sovereigns and not wicked ones to rule over the world.[71] Devotion does not thrive in the domain of the wicked. Zarathushtra asks the pious Frashaoshtra to follow the path in which righteousness and devotion are united in one.[72] A longing desire is expressed for the approach of Armaiti accompanied by Asha.[73] The wicked Bendva, who opposes every action of the prophet, does not acknowledge Armaiti;[74] hence he is accursed. Zarathushtra, in exaltation of spirit, pours out his soul to Armaiti and speaks of himself as the first and the most devout of men in veneration of her ideals and inquires how devotion may be more widely spread among those to whom he preaches the new faith.[75] It may be easily comprehended, therefore, how Armaiti will co-operate with Mazda at the final dispensation.[76]

Devotion is indispensable to religious life. It is the wholehearted attachment to a cause that leads men to embrace it and to work for it at all cost; and Zarathushtra, besides appealing to the rational side of man, approaches the heart of the individual to instil religious fervour in him. Vohu Manah teaches man to know Ahura Mazda, Armaiti inspires him to love the Lord. The religion that Zoroaster preaches is productive of excellent results for those who devote their hearts unto Ahura Mazda.[77] Such devout persons translate the noble teachings of the sage

[64] Ys. 31. 9.
[65] Ys. 31. 12.
[66] Ys. 34. 9.
[67] Ys. 34. 10.
[68] Ys. 33. 13.
[69] Ys. 43. 1.
[70] Ys. 44. 6.
[71] Ys. 48. 5.
[72] Ys. 46. 16.
[73] Ys. 48. 11.
[74] Ys. 49. 2.
[75] Ys. 44. 11.
[76] Ys. 47. 6.
[77] Ys. 31. 1.

into the practical life, and become religious. Devotion makes them holy.[78] The faith that is thus born in them from the depths of their hearts sustains them in the midst of all mishaps. Zarathushtra with the fervour of devotion prays that faith may come to them to transform their lives.

Homage, invocation, sacrifice, and the outpouring of prayer are the various expressions of the inward longings of man to commune with the divine, to enter into mutual intercourse with him. These are outlets through which man pours forth his heart to the fountain of all bounty. The individual who surrenders himself to the unseen powers, who kneels down in humility at the altar, who with uplifted hands pays homage to the hidden forces behind the rising sun or the waxing moon or the roaring ocean, and who carries an offering to the fire or a libation to the waters is psychologically greatly affected. Such attitudes of spirit have great subjective value, for they deeply influence man's character. Prayer is the highest type of expression through which man conveys to his Heavenly Father his feelings of joy and sorrow, gratitude and love, hope and fear, or in his hunger and thirst for the divine grace lays down his grievances before him, confesses his guilt, craves for help, seeks mercy. Devotion is the first requisite. Mere muttering of a few formulas with the lips, while the heart does not pulsate with devotional fervour, is no prayer. Where there is no such prayer, there is no devotion; and where there is no devotion, there is no religion.

It may be mentioned that Armaiti's relation to the earth as her genius, which becomes most pronounced in the Later Avestan period, is hinted at only incidentally in the Gathas.[79]

Haurvatat and Ameretat

Dual divinities of perfection and immortality. Haurvatat is the fulfilment of the end of man's life on this earth, as Ameretat is to be the eternal prize for his soul in the next world. The faithful look to these two divine impersonations that they may grant happiness to the true-in-heart, both now and for evermore. Haurvatat and Ameretat form a spiritual pair indissolubly bound together with the welfare of mankind, and the

[78] Ys. 51. 21.

[79] Cf. Ys. 47. 3.

two are always celebrated together. No single prayer is addressed to Haurvatat or to Ameretat alone in the Gathas, and they form the only instance of dual divinities in these hymns, though such pairs of angels are common in the Later Avesta.

Yet Haurvatat and Ameretat are not simply the active agents working side by side for the advancement of the kingdom of Ahura Mazda. They represent, likewise, the passive states of perfection, felicity, and immortality, which are the rewards of the pious. Haurvatat's perfection forms the loftiest ideal for man during his life. Vohu Manah's wisdom, Asha's righteousness, and Armaiti's devotion help man to redeem himself on earth from the physical and moral imperfections which his human nature entails upon him. If man takes advantage of this help Ameretat's eternal life of felicity will be the incomparable reward that Ahura Mazda, as the embodiment of perfection, will confer upon him in the Divine Kingdom of Khshathra Vairya.

Figuratively Haurvatat and Ameretat represent the ambrosial food of the blessed ones in heaven [80] and are emblematic of immortality. Whoso in this world listens to Zoroaster and accepts his message will receive perfection and immortality.[81] The prophet himself fervently prays for the promised participation in these blessings and declares that he who embraces righteousness shall attain to this celestial boon.[82] The man who offers the sacrifice of devotion unto Ahura Mazda receives endurance and vigour of body in this world and secures perfection and immortality of the spirit in the next world,[83] for endurance and vigour of body in this world correspond to the perfection and immortality of the spirit in the future existence.[84] These two Zoroastrian spiritual concepts occur together in the Gathas.[85] Armaiti as a spirit on earth is besought to grant endurance and vigour in order to enable man to uphold righteousness.[86] The faithful stand in need of these earthly blessings that they may be able the better to withstand evil in this world and to conduct an active crusade against wickedness, and thus to further righteousness.

[80] Ys. 34. 11.
[81] Ys. 45. 5.
[82] Ys. 44. 17.
[83] Ys. 45. 10.
[84] See Jackson, GIrPh. 2. 638.
[85] Ys. 34. 11; 51. 7.
[86] Ys. 43. 1.

Haurvatat and Ameretat have their sacred manthras, or formulas, and he who pronounces these gets the best reward.[87]

Water and plants are consecrated to Haurvatat and Ameretat. On the material side Haurvatat and Ameretat preside respectively over water and plants. As such they play an important part in the Later Avesta. In one passage at least in the Gathas they are mentioned side by side with water and plants. Ahura Mazda, who has created the animals, water, and plants, grants Haurvatat's perfection and Ameretat's immortality.[88]

Sraosha

The angel of religious obedience. In the Gathas Sraosha is among the very few personified abstractions corresponding to the concept of angels that have any distinct personality at all and that were destined to rise to prominence in the Later Avesta. Sraosha impersonates the obedience to religious lore. Professor Jackson calls him the priest-divinity, who acts as an embodiment of the divine service.[89] Zarathushtra longs to see Sraosha,[90] and prays that the angel of obedience may come unto himself and also unto every man whom Mazda wills.[91] The prophet preaches the new faith to the world of humanity. He exhorts mankind to pay heed to the words of untold goodness,[92] which the lord Mazda has vouchsafed unto him, and to embrace this cardinal virtue of obedience to the divine teachings, which is the province of this angel. Zarathushtra, in this manner, works to bring about the dominion and power of Mazda through the inauguration of righteousness upon the earth.[93] In the later periods Sraosha acts as a co-assessor with Mithra and Rashnu, who all combine to make up a heavenly tribunal for the judgment of the dead. Mithra and Rashnu, the two brother judges, seated with Sraosha, do not appear in the Gathas, but a passage speaks of Sraosha's coming as an angel of judgment with the reward unto the contending parties between good and evil.[94] Zara-

[87] Ys. 31. 6.
[88] Ys. 51. 7; cf; Darmesteter, *Haurvatat et Ameretat* in *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes*, 23. 35 ff.
[89] GIrPh. 2. 643.
[90] Ys. 28. 5.
[91] Ys. 44. 16.
[92] Ys. 45. 5.
[93] Ys. 33. 14.
[94] Ys. 43. 12.

thushtra invokes Sraosha as the greatest of the heavenly beings to appear at the final Consummation of the World.[95]

The word *sraosha* occurs also in several Gathic passages with its ordinary meaning of obedience, and not as the personified spirit of this abstract virtue.

Atar

The fire cult. The early Aryan settlers of Iran had brought the cult to their new home as their cherished heritage bequeathed to them by their Indo-Iranian ancestors. Tradition speaks of several great sacred Iranian fires consecrated by the pre-Zoroastrian kings. The Pahlavi Bundahishn mentions the fact that Yima and Kavi Haosravah established the fires Froba and Goshasp; and that Vishtaspa, the royal patron of Zarathushtra, consecrated the fire Burzin Mihr.[96] The Muhammadan writers of the tenth century speak of some ten such places dedicated to fire before Zoroaster's time.[97] The prophet of Iran thus found the cult of fire already established in Iran when he entered upon his divine mission on earth. He purified its archaic form and incorporated the cult into his new system. Of all the elements he raised fire, or light, to a place of the highest distinction in his faith.

Ahura Mazda is eternal light, his very nature is light. He lives in the everlasting lights of the highest heaven. Light in its various manifestations, whether as the fire of the hearth on earth, or the fiery substance in the bowels of the earth, or as the genial glow of the sun in the azure vault of heaven, or the silvery sheen of the crescent moon in the sky, or the flickering brilliancy of the stars in the firmament, or even in the form of life-giving energy distributed unto the entire creation, is emblematic of Mazda. No wonder, then, if the prophet of Ancient Iran made fire the consecrated symbol of his religion, a symbol which in point of sublimity, grandeur, and purity, or in its being the nearest earthly image of the heavenly Lord, is unequalled by any of its kind in the world.

When Vohu Manah, the Grand Vizir of the heavenly kingdom, approaches Zarathushtra, and inquires of him what is

[95] Ys. 33. 5.
[96] Bd. 17. 5-8.
[97] On the different fires, see especially Jackson, *Zoroaster*, pp. 98-100.

his most ardent desire, the prophet replies that his inmost yearning is to think of righteousness through the devotional gifts of his homage to Fire.[98] When the chosen of the Lord is thwarted at times in his great mission by the Druj, or Lie, he turns to Fire as one of the protectors that will best help him in the furtherance of the mighty cause of righteousness.[99] The fire of Mazda plays an important rôle in the work of the last judgment at the final Renovation of the World. Mazda has promised through righteousness that he will give award unto the contending parties of good and evil through Fire.[100] The Heavenly Father will deliver his final judgment upon the righteous and the wicked through Fire together with the Holy Spirit.[101] It is through Fire that the creator will bestow profit upon the righteous and bring harm unto the wicked.[102] Mazda will apportion reward and retribution to both the good and the evil through the glow of Fire, which is emblematic of righteousness.[103] The believers therefore pray that Fire, which is mighty through righteousness, may be a manifest help unto the faithful, but a veritable harm unto the foe.[104] The noble truth of the prophetic words of Zarathushtra will, in this manner, be vindicated when, at the final Dispensation, divine judgment shall be meted out to man through the red Fire of Mazda.[105]

Ashi

She personifies sanctity. This female genius of sanctity represents the life of piety and its concomitant result. In an eschatological sense she forms the reward assured in heaven to those who have led a life of sanctity upon earth. It is with the accompaniment of Ashi's recompense that the angel Sraosha approaches the seat of judgment to reward the righteous and wicked souls.[106] Zarathushtra invokes her in his crusade against Druj, or the Lie.[107] Ashi apportions Mazda's ordinances, about which the prophet desires to learn.[108] Whosoever, through the power that Ashi confers upon him, deprives the wicked of his possessions, reaps the rewards that Mazda has promised.[109]

In the later development of Ashi's cult, her sphere of activity

[98] Ys. 43. 9.
[99] Ys. 46. 7.
[100] Ys. 31. 3.
[101] Ys. 47. 6.
[102] Ys. 51. 9.
[103] Ys. 43. 4.
[104] Ys. 34. 4.
[105] Ys. 31. 19.
[106] Ys. 43. 12.
[107] Ys. 31. 4.
[108] Ys. 34. 12.
[109] Ys. 50. 3.

is enlarged, and in addition to representing the reward of the pious in heaven, she stands also for the prize of those who are diligent on earth. She becomes the genius of fortune, and the eager eyes of her numerous votaries are always turned to her for her favour. This new phase of her activity will receive attention in the place assigned to her in our treatment of the Later Avestan period.

Geush Tashan and Geush Urvan

The spirits of animal life, or of the universe. Two beings that are personified and enact an important rôle in introducing Zarathushtra as the chosen prophet of Ahura Mazda to mankind are Geush Tashan, 'the fashioner of the cow,' and Geush Urvan, 'the soul of the bull or cow,' as representing cattle in general. The relation between Ahura Mazda and Geush Tashan is very subtle, and has led scholars to be divided in their interpretation of these abstractions. One view is that Geush Tashan is the personification of the creative activity of Mazda, and is not separate from the godhead. Some scholars are inclined to take Geush Tashan as an independent being, who has created animal life.[110] Some again take the cow as typifying the earth, or as her symbol, and interpret Geush Tashan and Geush Urvan as representing the entire universe.[111]

Geush Urvan as representing the animal world complains in a bewailing tone to Ahura Mazda that anger, rapine, plunder, and wickedness are harassing its very existence, and therefore its soul sighs for a deliverer.[112] The spirit of the kine longs for a saviour who would teach men to put down this mischief and diligently work for the kine's welfare, grow fodder for their nurture, and lead an active and an industrious life. Zarathushtra, in other words, has preached the advantages of a settled life, and persuaded his hearers to emerge from the pastoral life and embrace agricultural habits. This is a stage of transition, and all could not easily give up the unsettled habits of life in which they were brought up. There is much disorder in the world, and the

[110] Cf. specially Bartholomae, AF. 3. 25-29; for references to other views, see Jackson, GIrPh. 2. 633; Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, p. 347, London, 1913.

[111] Cf. Haug, *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings, and Religion of the Parsis*, p. 148, London, 1884.

[112] Ys. 29. 1.

situation demands the services of a great master-mind, a genius, a philosopher, nay a prophet. Ahura Mazda holds a celestial conference to redress the grievances of the Soul of the Kine. This hope softens its despair. After patient deliberations, in which Vohu Manah, Asha, Geush Tashan, and the other heavenly lords take part, Vohu Manah, the premier councillor, declares that Zarathushtra is the only mortal who has heard the divine commands, and he is the one person suited to be sent to the world as the spiritual and temporal lord who could remove the grievances of Geush Urvan.[113]

We can see in this account an attempt to convince the disbelievers and heretics of the true mission of the prophet. The later texts resort to miracles of various sorts to fulfil the same purpose. Those who have not yet come, in Gathic times, to any definite conclusion as to the choice of their faith, and are still hesitating before embracing the new creed, are shown how preparations were made in heaven for Zarathushtra's mission, and how with divine sanction and direct approval of the godhead, the new prophet comes to them for their good.

[113] Ys. 29. 8.

CHAPTER VI

EVIL

The imperfect side of existence. The origin of evil has been the deepest problem of life. It confronts every human being in one form or another. If there is one question which has eluded all investigations of the keenest intellects of all lands and of all times; if there is one problem which has called forth volumes of writings from the profoundest of thinkers; if there is one riddle that has baffled all attempts of the sages at solving it; if there is one problem on which the last word yet remains to be said, despite the world's voluminous literature of some ten and twenty centuries—it is this problem of the existence of evil. It makes a world of difference whether one looks on life with a healthy mind and a cheerful spirit, or with a morbid mind and a sick spirit, or with an arrogant mind and a defiant spirit. The philosophies of life vary greatly from optimism or pessimism to cynicism or scepticism, according to the various casts of the temperaments of their founders. Life has been a blessing to some, but a curse to others. Some have sought satisfaction by giving up the world of activity with its joys and sorrows, others have tried to escape the temptations and vices of the world by leading a life of self-renunciation. To others still, freedom from existing has seemed the only salvation.

The creation has not only a bright but also a dark side, and the latter is to be accounted for. All is not well with the universe. There is something that savours of bad. The optimist who says that all is right with the world is as much at fault as the pessimist who says that all is wrong. It is not good to dilate upon wrongs, real and imaginary, and pine away under melancholy and gloom; it is wrong to groan and worry over the darkness of the night, oblivious of the light of the day; but it is equally wrong to dismiss this great question in a rough-and-ready way by denying outright the existence of evil. We cannot dismiss this eternal problem with a shrug of the shoulder. Evil

is far too potent a factor in human life to permit us to turn a blind eye to it. It is too real to be ignored and sophistically explained away. There have been people by thousands in all ages who have lived and died with tears ever streaming from their eyes, on whom the bright sun of joy has never shone. Fierce has been their struggle for the bare necessaries of life. Ill treated by the world, forsaken by fortune, mercilessly handled by society, millions eke out their wretched existence, labouring in vain to assuage the agonies of their hearts. Life has meant one prolonged misery to them and clouds of sorrow have obscured the very springs of joy. The garden of creation abounds in lovely sights, sweet flowers, and beautiful verdure, but there are also thorns and thistles, weeds and brambles, that require to be cleared out. The world, despite its infinite good, has a portion of evil in it. This requires mending. The physical and moral imperfections are too manifest to be passed over. The world is not perfect, it stands in need of perfection. The universe is not complete, it requires completion. The world is not ideal, but moves towards the ideal.

Zarathushtra stigmatizes evil as evil. The prophet of Mazda postulates the independent existence of evil. To him evil is just evil, nothing more nor less. It is not an unripe good, nor is it good in the making. It is the sorest spot on the surface of the universe, and Zarathushtra puts his finger upon it. Illusion does not cause evil, it exists in the realm of reality. It is the most disagreeable fact of God's universe, and the prophet of Iran looks it in the face. If man is conscious of a law of Asha, or Righteousness working within him, he is at the same time aware of a counter-law of Druj, or Wickedness, equally at work. The latter is not a negation of the former, it has as positive an existence as the law of righteousness. Both principles are constantly at work in man. It is man's duty to stand for the cause of righteousness. He is created in this world to fight against the evil. He plays a prominent part in the eternal struggle between good and evil. In this great conflict he is a co-worker and a fellow-combatant with Ahura Mazda. Men of all times and in all places have to work individually and collectively for this mighty cause. Zarathushtra nurtures a type of militant instinct to combat the Evil Spirit. The true life is a constant effort to mitigate the wrongs of the world.

Man has to fight the forces of evil to his last breath. His life is one of a continued crusade against the powers of wickedness and imperfection. Physical and moral imperfections are to be gradually removed, and the entire creation is to be pushed forward towards the ideal of perfection. Social wrongs are to be adjusted, society is to be regenerated. In short, the world of humanity is to be redeemed.

Angra Mainyu

The Evil Spirit and his characteristics. The arch-fiend who disputes the kingdom on earth with the Holy Spirit, Spenta Mainyu, or with Ahura Mazda, who introduces discord and death in the world, who strives to thwart the purposes of God, is Angra Mainyu, or the Evil Spirit. He does not owe his existence to the Good Spirit. He is independent. Consequently he is co-eval and co-existent, if not co-eternal with the godhead. When this Spirit of Evil first met his adversary, he created death.[1] In his thoughts, words, deeds, faith, conscience, soul, and everything else, he stands at the opposite pole to the Spirit of Goodness.[2] The Daevas, or demons, have entered into a compact with the Evil Spirit, and have chosen him as their liege.[3] They are his confederates and associates. The wicked man is the like of Angra, nay, he is himself Angra, or the enemy.[4] The term *angra* is also used in the ordinary meaning 'evil' as a designation of wicked men.[5] In this particular case it does not refer to the Evil Spirit. The devil lures men by his mischievous machinations to the path of wickedness, and lulls their spiritual sense to repose. He is the inveterate foe of humanity. Man, we may infer from the tone of the Gathas, should avoid him as he would a pestilence. Fortunate is he who successfully bridles the tumult of the Wicked One and breaks the heavy chains that fetter his spirit. But woe be to him who revolts from the Good Spirit, pays homage to the author of evil, and lives in bondage to him. Such a man is a moral pervert, a rebel, and suffers death in the spirit. The normal state of man is to be always on the side of the good, and by any act of going over to the realm of evil he creates for himself an unnatural situation. His sacred duty is to espouse the cause of the Good Spirit.

[1] Ys. 30. 4.
[2] Ys. 45. 2.
[3] Ys. 30. 6.
[4] Ys. 44. 12.
[5] Ys. 43. 15.

Daevas

The infernal crew. The diabolic spirits who have entered into a compact with Angra Mainyu to mar the good creation of Ahura Mazda are the Daevas, or demons. They are the offspring of the Evil Mind and spread their mischief over all the seven zones.[6] The Evil Spirit has taught them to mislead men through evil thought, evil word, and evil deed.[7] Mazda best remembers the misdeeds of these recreants and he judges accordingly.[8] When the two primal spirits of good and evil came together at the beginning of creation the demons chose evil and rushed with one accord to bring destruction to mankind.[9] The wicked are the beloved of the demons, for they are the ones that renounce the Good Mind and revolt from the wisdom of Ahura Mazda and from Righteousness.[10] The demons should therefore be abjured [11] and the Saviour Saoshyant will be the friend, brother, and father of those who hate them.[12]

As Ahura Mazda holds his council of celestial beings, so Angra Mainyu maintains in his infernal court a retinue of male and female demons. In opposition to every archangel and angel, —and these terms may be so understood theologically—the younger literature sets up a corresponding fiend. These form exact counterparts of the powers of goodness, and always act in direct opposition to them. We do not find the symmetry of diametric opposites between these rival forces carried out to completion in the extant Gathic literature. The names of not all the corresponding demons, who are the opponents of Mazda's ministering angels, are found. The rivals of Vohu Manah, Asha, and Sraosha are mentioned by name, as Aka Manah, Druj, and Aeshma, but with the exception of Druj, the adversary of Asha, the rest are seen working only sporadically and not in a systematic antagonism to their corresponding rival good spirits. Taromaiti, or heresy, the opponent of Armaiti, is named but once,[13] though the term does not occur in this particular passage as a personified demon. Aka Manah, Druj, and Aeshma are the only Daevas expressly mentioned in the Gathas. We shall deal with these separately.

[6] Ys. 32. 3.
[7] Ys. 32. 5.
[8] Ys. 29. 4.
[9] Ys. 30. 6.
[10] Ys. 32. 4.
[11] Ys. 34. 5.
[12] Ys. 45. 11.
[13] Ys. 33. 4.

Aka Manah

The work of this arch-demon. This evil spirit, whose name means 'Evil Mind,' is mentioned only twice in the Gathas. Even in his name he is the antithesis of his heavenly rival Vohu Manah, or Good Mind. Like his celestial adversary, who is sometimes called Vahishta Manah, 'Best Mind,' this fiend is also styled Achishta Manah, or 'Worst Mind.'[14] The Daevas are his progeny.[15] Zarathushtra undertakes by his prayer to drive out the demon of Evil Mind from before him, that is, from the world of Righteousness.[16] When man's mind is not filled with good thoughts of Vohu Manah, it becomes an easy prey to the onslaughts of the evil thoughts of Aka Manah. Whosoever is a victim to Aka Manah finds his thoughts enslaved by that demon.

Druj

Her Kingdom of Wickedness. As the rival of Asha, or Righteousness, Druj personifies Wickedness in every form and aspect. Ever since the Evil Spirit introduced evil in the world, the world of humanity has been and will be, until the final Renovation of the universe, divided into two distinct parties. Those on the side of Ahura Mazda follow the law of Righteousness; but those who have chosen to live in error have embraced the law of Druj, or Wickedness. The righteous form together the world of righteousness, whereas the wicked ones are classed as the members of the world of wickedness. The sacred mission of Zarathushtra lies in the work of converting these misguided men to righteousness and in winning them over to the side of Ahura Mazda.

The adherents of Druj. The man who yields to the temptations of Druj is a *dregvant,* 'wicked one,' as opposed to the *ashavan,* 'righteous one,' who follows Asha.[17] The adjective *dregvant* is itself etymologically connected with the word *druj,* 'deceit, wickedness.' Angra Mainyu himself is called *dregvant.*[18] The wicked one is of evil faith.[19] He defies the good admonitions of the Deity and is not willing to hear the good counsel, the divine word of the Good Mind. Zarathushtra seeks means, therefore,

[14] Ys. 32. 13.
[15] Ys. 32. 3.
[16] Ys. 33. 4; 47. 5.
[17] Ys. 30. 11.
[18] Ys. 30. 5.
[19] Ys. 45. 1.

to drive him out.[20] Zarathushtra exhorts his audience to listen attentively to his inspired teachings, so that the teacher of evil faith may not thereafter injure them.[21] The prophet comes as the lord between the parties of the righteous and the wicked and those whose good and evil deeds balance.[22] He preaches to those who, being led astray by the evil advice of Druj, smite the world of righteousness.[23] The wicked are far from the good-will of Ahura Mazda; their sinful deeds make them companions of Evil Mind.[24] They strive to estrange the righteous from the Best Mind,[25] and from the best deeds.[26] They strive to reduce all others to their own class. They bring distress and death to the house, village, town, and country, through their wicked spells.[27] He who harasses the prophet is the child of Druj.[28]

Druj's followers are to be requited with evil in this world. In his crusade against the Kingdom of Druj, Zoroaster is unsparing and even unforgiving. We do not see, in the words handed down from his lips, the gentler side of virtue, of returning good for evil. Here we have the ethics of retaliation. Once the antithesis between the Kingdoms of Righteousness and Wickedness is sharply defined, the latter is to be relentlessly opposed. The two parties are on the warpath, and strict discipline demands that the righteous man will on no account wink at or palliate wickedness, and let the evildoer go free without retribution. Wrong is to be handled simply as wrong, and the man who does wrong is to be met with his own weapons. Evil is to be requited by evil and not by goodness. Indifference and leniency threaten only to further the domain of Wickedness. Consequently evil is to be relentlessly put down.

Zarathushtra is the friend of the righteous, but a veritable foe to the wicked.[29] The wicked lords of the land vehemently oppose his work;[30] it is they who hinder the righteous in the pursuit of goodness. He who hurls these miscreants down from power clears the way for the good teachings.[31] Succouring the wicked is tantamount to practising wickedness. It is expressly said that the one who is good to the wicked is himself wicked.[32] Those who with their words, thoughts, and deeds bring punish-

[20] Ys. 44. 13.
[21] Ys. 45. 1.
[22] Ys. 31. 2; 33. 1.
[23] Ys. 31. 1.
[24] Ys. 47. 5.
[25] Ys. 32. 11
[26] Ys. 32. 12.
[27] Ys. 31. 18.
[28] Ys. 51. 10.
[29] Ys. 43. 8.
[30] Ys. 46. 1.
[31] Ys. 46. 4.
[32] Ys. 46. 6.

ment to the wicked fulfil the desire of Mazda.[33] No one, therefore, should be the cause of rejoicing to the wicked.[34] Every one, on the contrary, should always practise goodness towards the righteous, but deal out ill to the wicked.[35] The wicked is not to be given chieftainship.[36]

Druj's disciples fare no better in the next world. Ahura Mazda reckons the followers of Druj as wicked, and therefore retribution and misery await their souls.[37] Ahura Mazda gives happiness and joy hereafter to the righteous, but on the wicked he inflicts punishment and pain.[38] The wicked, according to the teachings of the Gathas, are led by their conscience through their own deeds to the abode of darkness.[39] One of the names of the inferno is *drujo demāna,* 'Abode of Druj.' Thither rush the wilfully blind and deaf,[40] thither go to perdition the crew of the wicked.[41]

Final defeat of Druj. The logical sequence to the war between the powers of righteousness and wickedness in these sharply defined poles of existence is the demanded ultimate victory of righteousness over wickedness. That is the goal towards which the world of humanity moves. When punishment will come to the wicked and the divine kingdom descend upon earth, Druj will fall forever into the hands of Asha.[42] Hence Zarathushtra abjures Druj,[43] and prays for power that he and his followers may be able to smite Druj.[44] He asks Ahura Mazda how it will be possible to deliver over Druj into the hands of Asha,[45] and it will eventually come to pass that the righteous will rout the wicked.[46] The tone of his divine inquiry implies the answer that when humanity unanimously adheres to Righteousness, Wickedness will ultimately perish.[47]

Aeshma

The demon of Wrath. The foe of Sraosha, who is above all the genius of obedience and revelation, is Aeshma, or 'Wrath.' When Geush Urvan, or the spirit of animal life, or of the universe, or however we may explain the name of the celestial entity referred to above, complains of the disturbance and disorder,

[33] Ys. 33. 2.
[34] Ys. 43. 15.
[35] Ys. 47. 4.
[36] Ys. 49. 9.
[37] Ys. 43. 4; 45. 7.
[38] Ys. 31. 14, 15; 51. 8, 9.
[39] Ys. 31. 20.
[40] Ys. 46. 11; 51. 14.
[41] Ys. 49. 11.
[42] Ys. 30. 8.
[43] Ys. 49. 3.
[44] Ys. 31. 4.
[45] Ys. 44. 14.
[46] Ys. 48. 2.
[47] Ys. 30. 10.

chaos and anarchy prevailing on the earth, it speaks of Aeshma as the prime originator of these calamities.[48] The Fashioner of the Universe, thereupon, consults Asha to find out a chieftain who would ultimately banish Aeshma from the creation.[49] Furthermore in this connection, when the twain spirits of good and evil first met together at the beginning of the creation, the demons embraced evil and rushed to the standard of Aeshma in order to bring destruction to the life of man.[50] Those who with firmness control and repress this arch-fiend are the saviours.[51] Zarathushtra says that the faithful follower of the good, who is striving to hold and make his own the Good Mind through righteousness, should in the first place put down Aeshma, the fiend of fury.[52]

[48] Ys. 29. 1.
[49] Ys. 29. 2.
[50] Ys. 30. 6.
[51] Ys. 48. 12.
[52] Ys. 48. 7.

CHAPTER VII

LIFE AFTER DEATH

The corporeal and the spiritual worlds. The Gathas generally speak of two different worlds, this one and the next. The present, or the earthly world, is called *astvant,* 'corporeal,' and the other, or heavenly world, is called *manahya,* 'spiritual.'[1] The soul cannot work unless invested with a bodily vehicle. Body and soul are the two main constituents in the formation of man. These two have their respective organs and other spiritual and material essentials. So long as these work in unison, man lives, and lives for the best, in this world. Death brings the dissolution of these diverse elements. The soul exists for the short span of its life on earth in the tenement of the body. When the material frame crumbles into dust it flees heavenward. The bodily death does not mean the death of the soul, for that is immortal. Man should therefore bethink himself to prepare for the journey to the next world.

The anomalies of earthly life and their final adjustment in heaven. The unequal distribution of earthly possessions among mankind, the unequal opportunities held out to man, the undeserved sufferings of the righteous, the unmerited success of the wicked, and various other anomalies of life have led the sages from time past to postulate a place where wrongs shall be ultimately adjusted, outraged righteousness expiated, and undetected wickedness punished. The order of the present world is far from perfection; the innocent often suffer, while the guilty escape with impunity; the virtuous poor man pines under grinding poverty, while the vicious rich man prospers. The doctrine of a future life where justice will be administered with exactitude in accordance with the divine ordinance, where grievances of this world will be redressed, and where every injustice, borne patiently, will be rectified, gives mental tranquillity and spiritual

[1] Ys. 28. 2; 43. 3.

calm to the afflicted. A vista of hope, according to Zarathushtra's teachings, thus opens before those who are roughly handled by this world. This hope brings peace that the world has not hitherto given them. It enables them manfully to endure pain and privation, suffering and sorrow, in the pious hope that a higher life awaits them in which they will receive their due. This hope assures man the continuation of what little happiness he has had in this world and the cessation of what great misery he suffered on earth. It gives meaning to the life of the individual, and inculcates a robust faith in the goodness of God. Man thus learns that he is not the sport of some evil-designing spirit who has carelessly thrown him on this world, resourceless and helpless. When in spite of his own honest work and hard labour he finds himself hopelessly lost in the feverish struggle for existence, he does not complain that some unjust and partial Maker has made him of clay inferior to that of his intensely selfish competitors, and given to him lesser opportunities for success than to his rivals in the race of life. The cheerful idea dawns upon him that the gloomy and dark night of anguish of his broken heart and troubled spirit will be followed by an eternal morn which will dispel all darkness and shed light on his path. He learns that the sufferings and sorrow in this world will lead to happiness and joy in the next.

Reward for the good and retribution for the evil. This doctrine forms the chief part of the ethical teachings of the Gathas.[2] All precepts in the sacred stanzas are generally accompanied by a repeated mention of reward or retribution in this or the next world. To be entirely disinterested in the acting of righteousness, or to follow virtue for virtue's sake, is a saintly prerogative. But the world is not made up of saints. The saint is the acme in the moral sphere, as is the intellectual genius in the realm of reason. Both form the climaxes in the two distinct spheres of human activity. The world begets tens of millions of average men, in contrast to the few isolated types of master-spirits who inspire the world with their boundless devotion or enlighten it by their profound intellect. These give a new life and impetus to the moral and intellectual activities of mankind. The saintly type of virtue is the goal which frail humanity feebly attempts to reach. Humanity, as a whole, is

[2] Ys. 30. 10, 11; 31. 14, 20; 45. 7; 51. 6, 8, 9.

evolving towards this ideal type of virtue, but meanwhile—and let this be emphasized till the striven-for goal is reached—it needs some sort of incentive to good conduct in the lives of its masses. Hence the prime motive of their embracing righteousness is the hope of future reward, and that of shunning wickedness is the fear of retribution.

It is no wonder, then, if we find an elaborately worked out system of rewards and retributions in the ethical code of the sacred Hymns. The faithful generally pray, among other boons, for endurance, durability, riches, and happiness in this world, and for rewards, weal, and immortality in the world to come. Zarathushtra implores Ahura Mazda to grant him long life in his divine kingdom,[3] and inquires what will bring happiness to his soul.[4] In the same manner, the devout lift up their praises of the Lord to the throne of the Almighty.[5] Ahura Mazda is the giver of reward to the righteous as well as of punishment to the wicked.[6] He is entreated to grant the riches of both the worlds.[7]

The soul reaps as it has sown. The soul is the master of the body and is responsible for the good or evil deeds it has done in this life. Man carves his destiny for the next world by his thoughts, words, and deeds in this life, and good or evil destiny awaits the soul in the next, or the spiritual world, which is essentially the place of reward and retribution. The life in this world is incomplete without its prolongation in the heavenly world, for it is only a life of probation, and the harvest of the good or evil seeds sown here is to be reaped hereafter by the soul in the world of the spirit. Whether the soul, on embarking to the next world, will be greeted by the righteous or seized by the wicked, depends entirely upon the sort of life it has led in this world. If it wins beatitude, it is on its own merits; if it loses this, it is equally through its own fault. If it ascends to heaven, it is owing to its righteous life in this world; if it sinks into hell, it is due to its wicked life here.

The soul is created pure and innocent. The lost soul that traverses the regions of inferno after death was at the first moment of its original entrance into the bodily world as pure and perfect as the soul of its neighbour now entering paradise. In the spiritual world class distinctions are unknown. There are no

[3] Ys. 43. 13.
[4] Ys. 44. 8.
[5] Ys. 45. 8.
[6] Ys. 43. 4.
[7] Ys. 28. 2.

white or black, red or yellow, high or low, touchable or untouchable souls, as man has most selfishly branded his brethren from the difference of the colours of their skin or their low rank in society. The noblest of souls may dwell in the tenement covered with the darkest skin; the vilest of souls may take the body with the whitest skin for its vestment; the loveliest of spirits may be found in the body with the ugliest complexion, and the foulest of souls may lurk in the fairest body.

The Bridge of Judgment. In connection with the future judgment we are given in figurative language by Zarathushtra the image of a bridge, called Chinvat, literally 'of the dividing one,' that connects this world with the unseen world, and serves as a medium to cross the deep chasm that separates the two. The reckoning of the good or evil deeds of the souls takes place after death,[8] and judgment is passed upon them before they can cross the Bridge. The souls fare here as is their due. The righteous souls come to this place in pious expectation of the reward that awaits them. Zarathushtra helps those righteous souls to cross the Bridge who have devoutly practised his religion.[9] But the wicked souls, who have estranged themselves from the Path of Righteousness by their own evil thoughts, words, and deeds, stand trembling at this judgment span.[10] Writhing with the pangs of their conscience and crying words of woe, they are now led by their own conscience to perdition.[11]

Heaven

Abode of the righteous after death. The sharp antithesis that existed between the righteous and the wicked in the material world finds its counterpart in the spiritual world. The righteous in this world formed *ashahya gaethā,* 'World of Righteousness,' as against the *dregvants* who belonged to the World of Wickedness. The place reserved for the pious souls that approach heaven is called *garo demāna,* 'Abode of Song.' Here they are surrounded by choirs of celestial beings. In one instance this region of felicity and bliss is called *vangheush demāna manangho,* 'Abode of Good Mind.'[12] Ahura Mazda with his heavenly host, and the souls of the righteous ones, live here.

[8] Ys. 31. 14.
[9] Ys. 46. 10.
[10] Ys. 51. 13.
[11] Ys. 31. 20; 46. 11.
[12] Ys. 32. 15.

The nature of reward in heaven. The blessed ones now enter into felicity. To the pious souls Ahura Mazda gives the good reward which their goodness has earned.[13] The fruition of paradise belongs to them. Those who have helped the prophet in his great work are rewarded in the spiritual world.[14] There the righteous enjoy felicity in immortality.[15] The good leave a good name and fame behind them on earth, and attain reward in the abode of Ahura Mazda, Vohu Manah, and Asha.[16] The weal of the blessed ones in heaven knows not any woe; it is the lasting happiness which is never followed by misery, and the bliss is without alloy, for the riches of Vohu Manah are everlasting.[17] Earthly happiness is fleeting, it may be supplanted by misery at the very moment that man thinks himself most secure in its enjoyment. The joy of life may at any moment be eclipsed by a passing cloud of sorrow; but the heavenly bliss is abiding, knowing no end, and having no pain in its train. It is the highest blessing of life, says Zarathushtra, which Mazda will give to all those that are the faithful followers of his excellent religion.[18]

Intermediary Place of Rewards

Between heaven and hell. Bartholomae first discovered that Ys. 33. 1 foreshadowed the doctrine of an intermediary place between heaven and hell for those souls whose good and evil deeds exactly balance, which forms so prominent a part as the doctrine of Hamistagan in the eschatological ideas of the later Pahlavi period.[19] The problem as to the interpretation of this Gathic passage, however, has remained a moot question, though the growing tendency on the part of the scholars is towards the acceptance of Bartholomae's view. Still another stanza, Ys. 48. 4, has recently been instanced as containing the germ of the Hamistagan doctrine.[20]

We learn from the Pahlavi works that an intermediary place, situated between earth and the star-region, is reserved for the souls in whose case the records of what may be called the Book of Life show that their good deeds are on a par with their evil deeds. The strict logic of the doctrine of Zoroastrian

[13] Ys. 30. 11; 43. 5.
[14] Ys. 46. 19.
[15] Ys. 45. 7.
[16] Ys. 30. 10.
[17] Ys. 28. 8.
[18] Ys. 53. 1.
[19] ZDMG. 35. 157, 158; cf. also Roth, *ib.* 37. 223-229.
[20] Cf. Geldner, *Aus dem Avesta* in KZ. 30. 530.

eschatology and the symmetry of the entire system demand a place where the souls that cannot ascend to heaven because of the heaviness of their sins, and yet are not so weighed down by sin as to descend into hell, can find their resting-place till the final judgment. The Avestan and Pahlavi texts record in full detail this eschatological doctrine, while the Gathas appear to recognize it either in spirit or in the abstract, so that we may be justified in concluding that the concept of the intermediate place was embodied in the teachings of Zarathushtra from the beginning.

Hell

The wicked are consigned to perdition. In contradistinction to the Best Existence, the abode of sinners after death is *achishta ahu,* 'Worst Existence.'[21] The region of hell is called *drujo demāna,* 'Abode of Wickedness,'[22] or *achishtahyā demāna manangho,* 'Abode of the Worst Mind.'[23] Darkness is the characteristic trait of the inferno.[24]

The nature of retribution in hell. The Gathic texts casually mention that torment and woe, punishment and sorrow, fall to the lot of the wicked in hell,[25] and that the demons greet the lost souls with foul food.[26] This figurative expression and others of like nature are taken literally in the later periods, when hell is materialized and the concept of physical torture is symmetrically worked out. The soul writhes in agony owing to the consciousness of its alienation from Ahura Mazda. Its own conscience condemns it unreservedly.[27]

Duration of punishment in hell. The Gathas speak of the punishment as lasting for a long period.[28] The idea of eternal damnation, that is, confinement in hell until the day of Renovation, which is markedly manifest in the later works, exists in embryo in the Gathas. A passage expressly speaks of the misery of the wicked souls as lasting for all time.[29]

[21] Ys. 30. 4.
[22] Ys. 46. 11; 49. 11; 51. 14.
[23] Ys. 32. 13.
[24] Ys. 31. 20.
[25] Ys. 30. 8, 11; 31. 14, 20; 43. 5; 44. 19; 45. 7; 49. 4; 51. 8, 9; 53. 7.
[26] Ys. 31. 20; 49. 11.
[27] Ys. 31. 20.
[28] Ys. 30. 11; 31. 20.
[29] Ys. 46. 11.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FINAL DISPENSATION

The end of the world. The Gathas speak of a period when the process of creation will stop, the evolution of the universe will reach its destined goal, as the cycle of the world will then be completed and creation and life will end.[1] Ahura Mazda will come at that time with his Holy Spirit, and with Khshathra and Vohu Manah, to accomplish this great work.[2] The world-process will then come to its final consummation as ordained by him at the beginning of creation.

The saviour prophets. The later scriptures speak of the different saviours that will appear in the world at various epochs to reform it, the last and the greatest of such saviours being Soshyos, or, to use the Gathic word, Saoshyant. The term *saoshyant* in both the singular and plural forms occurs in the Gathas. Here, however, the word is used, not as the name of any particular individual, but as a generic term, designating a group of saintly workers. It is in the Younger Avestan period that we first become acquainted with a person bearing this name. Those who by their good deeds work for the commandment of Ahura Mazda through Good Mind and Righteousness are called the saviour prophets.[3] Ahura Mazda is asked regarding the period when the wisdom of the saviours will dawn upon the world through their efficacious precepts.[4] The saviour prophet is the friend, helper, and father of those who hate the demons.[5] To be as worthy as these saviours who bring about the furtherance of the world, is the devout prayer of the faithful.[6]

Universal judgment. All human souls will be subjected to a collective judgment before the ultimate renovation of the world. The souls will have to undergo the great ordeal by fire and molten metal, to which reference has already been

[1] Ys. 43. 5; 51. 6.
[2] Ys. 43. 6.
[3] Ys. 48. 12.
[4] Ys. 46. 3.
[5] Ys. 45. 11.
[6] Ys. 30. 9.

made.[7] At the time of the final Dispensation Ahura Mazda will judge the souls of the righteous and the wicked by the test of his blazing fire.[8] The powerful fire will be a manifest help unto the holy, but harmful unto the wicked.[9] Asha and Armaiti will help Ahura Mazda at this final judgment.[10] Mazda knows best how to mark out the lost sinners at the final ordeal of the molten metal.[11] This tribulation will reclaim the sinners.[12]

Righteousness triumphs over wickedness. The world of humanity will at last arrive at the stage when Druj, or Wickedness, will come into the hands of Asha, or Righteousness. This ideal aim and end has been the final goal laid out in the Gathas. Zarathushtra prays over and over again for the period when Righteousness will smite Wickedness. Every gain to the Kingdom of Righteousness is a loss to the Kingdom of Wickedness, and when there is no Wickedness left, Righteousness will reign supreme. When the law of Wickedness is thus annihilated, the divine law of Righteousness will pervade the entire world. Even the wicked souls who had revolted from Mazda in the corporeal world and gone over to the Evil Spirit will after the retribution come over to Mazda and acknowledge his sovereignty. As the great shepherd, Ahura Mazda will bring back into the fold of righteousness all those persons who, led astray by the arch-tempter, had left his flock.

The later texts give us a systematic account of the final struggle between the good and the evil powers, and relate in detail how every one of the heavenly beings will smite his own particular opponent evil spirit. As we have already seen, the Gathas speak of the victory of Asha, or Righteousness, and the defeat of Druj, Wickedness. The fate of Angra Mainyu, the father of evil, is not mentioned; but we can infer that when once the law of Wickedness perishes, its originator must be impotent; in other words, the final defeat of Druj signifies also the defeat of the arch-Druj Angra Mainyu.

The Kingdom of Righteousness: man's share in its inauguration. Each age has its ideals, religious and social; and they vary in accordance with the high or low grades of civilization of its peoples. The establishment of the Kingdom of Righteous-

[7] Ys. 51. 9.
[8] Ys. 31. 3, 19; 43. 4; 47. 6.
[9] Ys. 34. 4.
[10] Ys. 47. 6.
[11] Ys. 32. 7.
[12] Ys. 47. 6.

ness is the one universal ideal, which knows no change. Ahura Mazda will bring about the renovation of the world in accordance with his divine will.[13] The whole universe moves towards the realization of this state of perfection, and humanity evolves towards this ideal. The righteous at all times help to bring this great event nearer by their deeds, even though the onward march may be beset with obstacles, and progress at times may be retarded, yet it can never be wholly arrested. Occasionally it may seem to swing back, but on the whole its move is onward along the path. If progress and evolution seem to be slow, the faithful need not despair. In the course of eternity Ahura Mazda has ample time to finish the work with the co-operation of the children of men. Human beings that form a society at a given period in the endless chain of Boundless Time have to give their respective share in the furthering of this great work. If society suffers for the faults of its units, it is because the individuals are human; but even these faults and these sufferings turn out to be incentives for the sure and steady work of advancement. Progress is the Zoroastrian watchword. Man's birth is an ascent to the state of final perfection. Each individual has to join hands with the rest of his fellows in this great and noble undertaking; he must work to the extent of his powers and lend his aid, no matter how insignificant, to the attainment of that ideal end. Man need not feel appalled by the narrowness of the sphere in which he can labour, nor must he be staggered at the vastness of the work to be done. The individual life should add something to the sum total of the life of humanity. Everyone has to consecrate his life to the good of humanity. It is a state in which everyone feels sympathy for his neighbour and helps everyone else. This is the common aim that knits together all men that have visited this earth since creation began, and must equally unite for all time those that will inhabit it up to the end of existence. The eternal conflict aims at the universal. Individuals in all ages have to work to accomplish this great end. Each generation profits by the work done in the past, makes some infinitesimal advance and adds its own share to the inherited legacy, thus handing it down to posterity in a better and a higher condition than that in which it received this inheritance. At last, by the constant efforts of

[13] Ys. 34. 15.

the ages and the accumulated work of humanity, the desired object will be secured. Every effort made in this direction is a step upward gained on the ladder leading to the ultimate goal.

The great world drama will then be over, the final curtain will fall on the tragic element in creation; the ultimate triumph of good over evil will be secured, the divine Kingdom of Righteousness will be established, and all this will come to pass through the work of man, the chief actor and hero of the human play, who co-operates and participates in this great work with his Heavenly Father. Man will then enter into the everlasting joy of Ahura Mazda. Such is the great message of Hope that the prophet of Iran brings to the world of humanity from Ahura Mazda.

THE AVESTAN PERIOD

FROM ABOUT B. C. 800 TO ABOUT A. D. 200 AT THE LATEST

CHAPTER IX

THE AVESTAN PEOPLE

The races that formed the Zoroastrian fold. The Bactrians, the Medes, and the Persians successively rose to political independence in Ancient Iran. The Bactrians of the Northeast, the Medians of the Northwest, and the Persians of the Southwest, were politically welded into one Persian nation, under the Achaemenian empire, and religiously they were from early times knit into one community by the creed of Zoroaster. This process of blending these different peoples into one homogeneous nation was completed by the time of the conquest of Persia by Alexander the Great.

Athravans, the Zoroastrian priesthood of Eastern Iran. The recognized priest of the Avestan texts is the *āthravan*, the fire-priest of the Indo-Iranian period. Nature hails Zarathushtra at his birth as an athravan.[1] He is the very first and foremost of the athravans.[2] Even Ahura Mazda himself takes this term to define one of his own innumerable names.[3] Like their Vedic brethren, the Avestan people divided their society into different professional groups; and the athravans formed the first of them. Fire was their special charge, and it was their priestly duty to tend the sacred flame in the shrines, and also to go abroad preaching the religion of Mazda.[4] It seems, however, to have been left to a different wing of the sacerdotal community to plant the banner of Zoroastrianism in the western part of Iran, which was destined to become the centre of a great civilization and the seat of an empire far greater in political importance than that which obtained among the Eastern Iranians.

Not long after the death of Vishtaspa, the royal patron of Zarathushtra, the Kingly Glory left the eastern line of the Iranian Kings and flew to the west. With the shifting of the political sphere of influence, the centre of religious authority gravitated towards the west. Ragha, hereafter, became the pontifical seat

[1] Yt. 13. 94.
[2] Yt. 13. 88, 89.
[3] Yt. 1. 12.
[4] Ys. 42. 6.

of the descendants of the prophet. The temporal and spiritual power here was vested in the chief pontiff of the Zoroastrian world.[5] Religious influence radiated from this ecclesiastical centre, and the Magian neighbours were possibly the first to imbibe the new ideas and gradually to spread them among the Medes and later among the Persians.

Magi, the Zoroastrian priesthood of Western Iran. The Medes had founded a vast empire on the ruins of Assyria in the seventh century B.C. The Magi formed one of the six tribes of the Medes,[6] and constituted their sacerdotal class. The Median empire was short-lived. Cyrus overthrew Astyages, the last Median king, in B.C. 550, and laid the foundation of the great Achaemenian empire. The Persians thus conquered the earthly possessions of the Medes and the Magi, their priests; but they were in turn conquered by the latter in spirit. The Magian victory in the spiritual domain more than made amends for the loss of their temporal power. The racial jealousy and antagonism between the conquerors and the subdued races, however, continued for a considerable time, owing to the Median attempts to regain their ascendency. When Cambyses heard of the Magian priest Gaumata's revolt to overthrow the Persian empire, he exhorted the people never to let their kingdom fall into the hands of the Medes and the Magi.[7] The anniversary of the day of the Magian usurper's fall, known as *Magophonia*, was observed by the Persians as a great festival, and Herodotus informs us that the Magi kept within their houses on that day.[8] With the lapse of time, however, the Medes and the Persians became more and more reconciled to each other. The Magi were the priests of the Medes; they now became the priests of the Persians. This strengthened their position. No sacrifices were now offered without them.[9] They were held in great esteem, and their exalted position at the court of the kings insured them a considerable influence over the people. They were looked upon as the wise mediators between man and God. They officiated at the ceremonies, chanted the hymns, sacrificed at the altar, explained omens, practised divination, expounded dreams, and ministered to the various religious wants of the people.[10]

[5] Ys. 19. 18.
[6] Herod. 1. 101.
[7] Herod. 3. 65.
[8] Herod. 3. 79; cf. Ctesias, *Pers.*, §15.
[9] Herod. 1. 132.
[10] Herod. 1. 107, 108; 7. 19, 37.

The Magi presumably implant the Zoroastrian practices in Western Iran. It seems that the Magi took a long time to supplant the religious practices of the Persians by their reform. The two races differed very widely on some of the main religious observances. For example, the Magi held the elements of nature sacred. The earth was to be kept pure from defilement. Hence they exposed the corpses of the dead to be devoured by birds; though the Persians, on the contrary, enclosed the corpses in wax, and interred them in the earth.[11] This was probably a concession to Magian practices. We gather from Arrian that Alexander sent the body of Darius to be interred in the royal mausoleum by the side of the remains of the departed ones of the royal family of Persia.[12] The Persians continued this practice for a considerable time, until finally with the complete fusion of the two races they seem to have exchanged burial for the exposure of the corpses. The work of infusing the Zoroastrian doctrines among the Persians probably began under the earliest of the Achaemenians. It ended in the complete conversion of the Persians to Zoroastrianism before the wreck of their great empire.

The classical writers speak of the Magi, and not of the Athravans. The earliest Greek writer to acquaint the Western world with the history of the nations of Ancient Iran is Herodotus, who wrote about a century and a quarter before the fall of the Achaemenian empire. Writing at a period when the Persians were in the zenith of their power in Western Iran, and when the Magi were the recognized priestly class, he, with the other writers that follow him, acquainted the West with the Magi. The term came to be regarded as synonymous with learning and wisdom. The athravans, the real custodians of the Avesta and the guardians of the Zoroastrian symbol of fire, are unknown to these writers. This may be due to the fact that Eastern Iran, which was the home of the athravans, had politically declined, and the writers are mainly concerned with the Persians of the west, and their immediate predecessors, the Medes.

The Zoroastrian practices alleged to have originated with the Magi. The disposal of the dead by exposure to the light of the sun, the reverence for the elements, fire, water, and earth,

[11] Herodotus, 1. 140.
[12] *Anabasis*, 3. 22. 1; and cf. *Shah-namah*, tr. Warner, vol. 6, p. 56.

the stringent laws for bodily cleanliness, the active crusade against noxious creatures, are some of the salient features of the religious practices and beliefs of the Magi, that we glean from the writings of the Greek authors. They comprised a part of the Magian religion. The Magi, it seems to us, borrowed them from the athravans at some remote period. No data, however, are available to help us in our task of ascertaining when this took place. That the Magi introduced them in Western Iran is universally accepted. Moreover, a school of eminent Western scholars who uphold the theory of the Magian origin of the Avesta, claim that these religious practices originated with the Magi. They are the characteristic features of the Magian faith, which, we are told, during the period of their ascendency the Magi foisted upon Zoroastrianism. The whole of the Vendidad, it is claimed, savours of their spirit, nay, it is their work.

The internal evidence of the Avesta militates against the theory of the Magian origin of the sacred texts. With the exception of a solitary passage, presumably a late interpolation, which pronounces a curse upon those who ill treat the Magi,[13] the entire Avestan texts do not recognize the Magi. The class designation of the priests is persistently athravan. The cardinal tenets of the Vendidad, its elaborate rules for bodily purity, its copious sanitary code are associated with the athravan in the Avestan texts. It is not a Magus who cleanses the defiled by ablution ceremonials, heals the sick by the recital of the holy spells, and moves about with a *penom* over his mouth, and a *khrafstraghna* in his hand; but it is an athravan who exercises all these powers and more. The sacerdotal class is known by the title of athravan throughout the texts. It is the only privileged priestly class that the Avesta recognizes. It is inconceivable that the name of the Magi should not figure in the work, if it is composed by them. The entire suppression of the mention of their name cannot be accidental. It must be due to conscious purpose and premeditation. It is yet to be proved that the forms derived from *maga,* 'great,' occurring in the Gathas and in the Avesta designate this priestly class. The terms have no bearing on this problem. Did the athravans look to the Magi as their undesirable rivals in their clerical profession, who disputed with them the sphere of influence over the hearts of the laity?

[13] Ys. 65. 7.

If the athravans were not favourably disposed to the Magi, we should have found the latter classed among the Kavis and the Karapans, the heretical priestly castes upon whom they invoke divine judgment. They would have warned the faithful against their teachings. This they did not. Hence the probable conclusion that the Avestan texts are the productions of the athravans, the legitimate guardians of the Zoroastrian canon, and that the Western Magi imbibed from them the Zoroastrian doctrines which they gave to the western Medes and Persians.

CHAPTER X

PROMULGATION OF THE FAITH OF ZARATHUSHTRA

The Avestan works extol Zoroastrianism as the excellent religion. The various designations of the religion of Ancient Iran that we meet with in the Avestan period are the good Mazdayasnian Zoroastrian religion, the Ahurian faith, the Law of Zarathushtra, and the Law against the demons.

Zarathushtra's religion is spoken of as the most excellent one among all that have been,[1] and in the confession of faith the initiate hails it as the greatest, best, and fairest one among those that have been, that are, and that are to be.[2] It is further said that just as the great sea Vourukasha is greater than other waters, or as a mighty stream flows more swiftly than the rivulets, or as a huge tree conceals under its shadow plants and shrubs, or as the high heavens encompass the earth, even so is the religion of Zarathushtra superior in greatness, goodness, and fairness to others.[3] The religion of Mazda brings purity unto him who purifies his nature with good thoughts, good words, and good deeds,[4] and cleanses him of the evil thoughts, evil words, and evil deeds, as the powerful wind that cleanses the plain.[5] The inexpiable sins committed by a non-believer are totally absolved if he embraces the faith of Zarathushtra, and promises not to sin again.[6] Zoroastrianism is synonymous with active life and it is figuratively said that whoso cultivates corn enables the religion of Mazda to move with a hundred men's feet, suckles it by a thousand women's breasts, and propitiates it by ten thousand rituals.[7] The excellent faith is the veritable giver of good unto all.[8]

The Zoroastrian Church soon loses state support in her religious propaganda. We have already seen how great an

[1] Yt. 13. 91, 92.
[2] Ys. 12. 9.
[3] Vd. 5. 22-25.
[4] Vd. 5. 21.
[5] Vd. 3. 42.
[6] Vd. 3. 40, 41.
[7] Vd. 3. 30, 31.
[8] Yt. 11. 3.

impetus Zoroastrianism received in its early days when Vishtaspa and his royal court embraced the new faith. But the Mazdayasnian religion was not destined to retain very long this active support and patronage of a ruling people. As indicated above, Eastern Iran soon lost its political influence. The west had risen in power, and the Zoroastrian priests, who sought state help in their effort for the promulgation of their faith, had to turn (though other views may differ) to the great Achaemenian monarchs who presided over the destinies of a vaster number of people than the petty chiefs of the royal house of Vishtaspa had done in Eastern Iran. The Achaemenian kings were certainly Mazdayasnians; presumably, they were Zoroastrians. But they were decidedly not glowing with the religious fervour of missionary zeal. They never demanded conversion to their own faith on the part of the conquered races. Their empire was made up of various nationalities of diverse faith, and the Achaemenian rulers were always tolerant towards the religions of these subject races. Guided, perhaps by political expediency, they often built or restored the temples of alien peoples, and occasionally even honoured the Jewish, Egyptian, Babylonian, and Greek divinities.[9] Cyrus ordered the restoration of the temple at Jerusalem,[10] and Darius, the devout worshipper of Auramazda, favoured its rebuilding as decreed by Cyrus.[11] According to the Babylonian inscriptions, Cyrus restored the gods of Sumer and Akkad to their former temples, from which they had been brought out by Nabuna'id, the last native ruler of Babylon. He returned the captive gods of Kutu to their home and rebuilt their temples.[12] Cyrus was the shepherd and the anointed of Yahweh in Judea,[13] he was the chosen of Marduk in Babylon. Darius is called the son of the goddess Neit of Sais, in an Egyptian inscription at Tell el-Maskhutah.[14] Cambyses ordered the purification of the desecrated temple of Neit, and paid homage to the goddess.[15] In a Greek inscription Darius reproved his satrap Gadatas for neglect-

[9] Cf. Gray, *Achaemenians*, in ERE., vol. 1, pp. 69-73.
[10] Ezra 1. 1-11; 3. 7; 4. 3; Is. 44. 28; 2 Chron 36. 22, 23.
[11] Ezra 6. 1-15.
[12] *Cylinder Inscription*, 32-35.
[13] Is. 44. 28; 45. 1.
[14] Golenischeff, *Recueil de Travaux relatifs à la Philologie*, 13. 106, 107.
[15] Petrie, *A History of Egypt from the Nineteenth to the Thirtieth Dynasties*, 3. 361, 362, London, 1905.

ing the reverential attitude toward Apollo.[16] In vain would a zealous priestly class look to such royal patrons for active help in their missionary work, much less in their aggressive attitude towards the beliefs of other peoples. In the absence of any organized and systematic missionary movement encouraged or furthered by the state, the priests must thus have had to rely upon their own efforts and personal exertions in their religious propaganda. The pontifical successors of Zarathushtra had to wait long before their cherished ideal of bringing about the union between the Zoroastrian Church and State was realized under the Sasanian empire.

The religious propaganda. The authors of the sacred texts of the Younger Avestan period depict Zarathushtra as saying that he will exhort the people of the house and clan, town and country to embrace the Mazdayasnian religion and teach them to practise it faithfully in their thoughts, their words, and their deeds.[17] The devout followers of the faith wish eagerly to spread abroad between heaven and earth the Ahuna Vairya, or most sacred formula of the Iranian faith, together with the other holy prayers.[18] The zealous priests invoke Chisti, the heavenly associate of Daena, or religion, to grant them a good memory and strength for their body.[19] These Zoroastrian missionaries travelled to distant lands for the purpose of promulgating the religion, and their homeward return from their sacred missions is celebrated by the faithful.[20] The proselytizing zeal on the part of the Zoroastrian priests seems to have provoked opposition from non-believers. Keresani, a powerful ruler of a foreign land, we are informed, prevented the fire-priests of Iran from visiting his country to preach the Zoroastrian doctrines.[21] In spite of all such obstacles thrown in their way, the Zoroastrian missionaries gradually succeeded in planting the banner of their national faith both near and afar.

Spread of Zoroastrianism to remote lands. Attention has already been called to the fact that the Gathas celebrated the conversion of Fryana the Turanian and his descendants. The Avestan texts include some more Turanian names in the canon-

[16] Cousin and Deschamps, *Lettre de Darius, fils d'Hystaspes,* in *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique,* vol. 13, pp. 529-542.
[17] Ys. 8. 7.
[18] Ys. 61. 1.
[19] Yt. 16. 17.
[20] Ys. 42. 6.
[21] Ys. 9. 24.

ical list of sainted persons.[22] The most illustrious of these Turanian Zoroastrians was Yoisht-i Fryana, who sacrificed unto Ardvi Sura and begged of her as a boon that he might be able to answer the riddles that the malicious wizard Akhtya put to him.[23] The boon was granted him,[24] and the later Pahlavi treatise which bears the name of the Turanian saint adds that Yoisht-i Fryana solved the enigmas put forth by the wizard who was killing all those who were unable to answer his questions. The saint, in his turn, proposed to Akhtya three riddles, which the wizard was unable to answer. The saint, thereupon, put the sorcerer to death.[25] The Fravardin Yasht [26] commemorates the Fravashi of Saena, an illustrious convert to Zoroastrianism. We learn from the Pahlavi works that this apostle of the faith left behind him one hundred disciples who preached the Mazdayasnian faith in the land of Seistan.[27] Armenia came under the Zoroastrian influence at a very early date, and a corrupt form of Zoroastrianism prevailed in the country for several centuries.[28] Cappadocia, Lydia, and Lycia were the scene of an active Zoroastrian propaganda. The Aramaic inscriptions recently discovered in Cappadocia mention Daena, the female genius of the Mazdayasnian religion conjointly with the native god Bel.[29] India and China witnessed the spread of the gospel of Iran.[30]

The proselytizing work on the part of the Zoroastrian ministers of the faith was thus carried on with a considerable amount of success, though we are not in a position to form any idea regarding the numbers of the followers of the religion of Mazda at this period.

[22] Yt. 13. 113, 120, 123.
[23] Yt. 5. 81-82.
[24] *Ib.* 83.
[25] Cf. West and Haug, *Yosht-i Fryan,* in *Arda Viraf,* pp. 247-266, London, 1872.
[26] Yt. 13. 97.
[27] Modi, *The Wonders of Sagastān,* in *Aiyādgār-i Zarirān,* pp. 126, 127, Bombay, 1899. For further references, see Jackson, *Zoroaster,* p. 137, n. 6, New York, 1899.
[28] Cf. Ananikian, *Armenia (Zoroastrian),* in ERE., vol. 1, pp. 794-802.
[29] Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris für Semitische Epigraphik,* vol. 1, p. 67 f., Giessen, 1902.
[30] *Shah-namah,* tr. Warner, vol. 1, pp. 76, 77. For references regarding the Zoroastrian propaganda in China, see Jackson, *Zoroaster,* pp. 278-280.

CHAPTER XI

THE YOUNGER AVESTAN RELIGION

From the Gathas to the Later Avesta, a retrograde step. We now enter upon a new field of investigation, and move in an entirely changed atmosphere as we proceed. The buoyant spirit of the Gathic hymns is preserved to a great extent in the prose compositions of the Haptanghaiti, or the section of 'Seven Chapters' in the Avestan Yasna, written in the Gathic dialect during the transition period that intervened between the close of the Gathic age and the opening of the Avestan period. The lofty tone of the earlier compositions gradually declines, and the greater part of the Yasna, Yashts, and Vendidad becomes heavy and monotonous. On only rare occasions do the texts exhibit sudden flashes of transcendent beauty and devout fervour. The growing tendency is for complexity and concreteness. The Gathas generally dealt with the abstract concepts. Every one of the Amesha Spentas, as we have already seen, impersonated some cardinal virtue. Though Asha, the genius of righteousness, and Haurvatat, that of perfection, have each a Yasht consecrated to them in the Younger Avesta, the abstract virtues of these archangels do not receive any recognition in these hymns. The secondary and concrete qualities with new associations loom larger in the thoughts of their composers than do the primary qualifications. Rather than dealing with the righteousness of Asha Vahishta and the perfection of Haurvatat, the later texts expatiate upon their healing powers by means of the recital of the various formulas of magical efficacy and the spells to drive away the demons of disease and death. This general tendency of drifting towards the concrete and material in religion is the characteristic feature of the times and endures throughout the Younger Avestan as well as the subsequent Pahlavi period, in which it reaches its climax.

Daena, Chisti, Mithra, Raman, Rata, Manthra, Airyaman, Asha, Hvare, Maonghah, Asman, Ushah, Atar, and Zam fur-

nish us with instances in which terms that were used in the Gathas to connote the ordinary meanings are now personified as angels.

The Indo-Iranian cult that passes under the mantle of Zarathushtra. The divinities to whom the pre-Zoroastrian Iranians paid their homage, and all of whom were conspicuous by their absence in the Gathas, now pervade the entire Avestan religion. The major portion of the Avestan texts sings of their glory. They form an indissoluble part of the religion of this period, and have remained so up to this day. To think of Zoroastrianism without them is inconceivable. The two cannot be separated. And yet they do not get recognition in the Gathas. This absence of mention by the prophet of the divinities whom the ancients knew and honoured, and who occupy a pre-eminent position in the later development of Zoroastrianism, has been a great problem that has so far defied solution.

It is generally asserted by Western scholars that Zoroaster's religion was a reform of the primitive faith of the Iranians. But the reform had not lasted long, owing to the counter-reformation that had followed the prophet's death. This revived the religion that Zoroaster came to replace. The prophet had dethroned and banished the Indo-Iranian divinities from the spiritual kingdom. But they had once more usurped the throne, and with common consent passed themselves off as indigenous satraps in the kingdom of Ahura Mazda. Their cult was too deep rooted to die out soon, and the priests were compelled to admit it into the Zoroastrian theology, when the towering personality of Zoroaster was removed from the scene of activity after his death.

It seems to us that we tread a very delicate path when we set aside as non-Zoroastrian all that does not appear in the Gathas. Are we sure we are standing on firm ground when we dogmatically assert that the prophet of Iran discarded the pantheon and purposely kept it out of his religion of reform? The Haoma ceremony is indissolubly interwoven in the Yasna ritual from the Avestan period down to the present day. But the Gathas are silent about it. It is therefore alleged that Zarathushtra looked upon this Indo-Iranian cult with abhorrence, and the occurrence of Haoma's epithet 'far from death' in Ys. 32. 14 is cited to prove, as we have already seen, that the prophet

branded the cult as evil. Perhaps he did so, perhaps not. We have no means to ascertain it. The Indo-Iranian divinities Mithra, Verethraghna, and others occupy a most exalted place in the Avestan and subsequent periods. The Gathas of Zarathushtra knew them not. Are they post-Zoroastrian? Did they migrate to Iran after the passing away of the prophet from this world? This cannot be. For the pre-Zoroastrian kings and heroes knew them and sacrificed unto them. They shared the spiritual domination over the hearts of the people of Iran when Zarathushtra preached his new faith. And yet the prophet does not immortalize them in his Gathas.

We are not unmindful of the argument that the Gathas, being short devotional hymns for the use of the faithful, may not be expected to contain the entire Avesta pantheon, or an elaborate ritual. The argument may explain something, but not all. It fails to account for the entire elimination of the very names of the most prominent angels Mithra, Verethraghna, and their associates. Vital problems as these remain unsolved. In the absence of sufficient data, it is not possible for us to determine what particular Indo-Iranian beliefs and practices were discountenanced by the prophet, and yet admitted into the Zoroastrian theology as a concession to the unbending will of the populace by the prophet's successors.

The angels that outshine the archangels. Some of the Yazatas, both those of pure Iranian extraction and those of Indo-Iranian origin, have risen to such a great popularity during this period that they are honoured more than the Amesha Spentas. The angels Anahita and Tishtrya, Mithra and Verethraghna figure more prominently than the archangels Vohu Manah and Asha Vahishta, Armaiti and Ameretat. Some of the longest Yashts, or sacrificial hymns, are composed in their honour. Yet the archangels, who are higher in the spiritual hierarchy, who occupied a unique position in the Gathas, and whose glory the prophet ever sang with his clarion voice to the people of Iran, have now either to content themselves with short laudatory compositions or go entirely without any special dedication. Some of the attributes that are the prerogative of Ahura Mazda alone are lavishly applied to the leading angels; but the authors are sparing even to parsimony when they confer honorific epithets on the Amesha Spentas.

Great as the benevolence of these celestial beings is, it is tarnished by their imprecations upon their careless votaries. A few of the Yazatas, or Adorable Ones, are conjointly honoured with Ahura Mazda in the same strain. They are eager to help man and stand by his side in the hour of his need, if they are invoked. They help man, if man remembers them. Moreover, they are themselves strengthened in their work by man's offerings. Tishtrya despondently complains to Ahura Mazda that he is worsted by his adversary Apaosha because mankind do not propitiate him with sacrifices as they ought to. If they did so, Tishtrya would be emboldened and enabled to conduct his warfare with the demon of drought more vigorously. There is a ring of partial jealousy for his more fortunate companions, when we hear Tishtrya bitterly complaining that people do not sacrifice unto him to the extent that they do unto the other angels, who are more popular among them. Mithra, likewise, complains of man's occasional neglect of his invocation, which evokes his displeasure. And Mithra is terrible when angered. Unless man appeases his wrath by abundant sacrifices, he punishes his wretched victim mercilessly. Similarly, the Fravashis, or Guardian Spirits, are the most helpful genii, but on condition that man propitiates them with sacrifices. When satisfied, they are of indescribable help, but once offended they are hard to deal with. They are to be approached with religious awe. They are to be feared, rather than loved. This fear of the celestial beings may engender obedience in man, but not devotion. And devotion is the higher of the two virtues.

Ahura Mazda invokes his heavenly ministers for help. In the Gathas we saw Ahura Mazda co-operating and holding conferences and working in consort with his heavenly subordinates. The Younger Avesta gives a picture of a step in advance in this direction. Here Ahura Mazda is often depicted as sacrificing unto the minor divinities, and asking for boons from them. For instance, he prays to Ardvi Sura, Mithra, and Vayu for favours, and they grant him these boons.[1] Vayu even goes further and says he does good to Ahura Mazda.[2] The Fravashis helped Ahura Mazda, and the Lord himself says that had he not received their help, great would have been the difficulty.[3] But even here it is expressly said that all these beings whom Ahura

[1] Yt. 5. 17-19; 10. 123; 15. 2-4. [2] Yt. 15. 44. [3] Yt. 13. 12, 19.

Mazda invokes for help are his creations. It is he himself who has made Tishtrya and Mithra as worthy of honour, sacrifice, and prayer as himself.[4] Rather than commanding his envoys and viceroys as the sovereign ruler to put his orders into execution, he solicits their co-operation in his work. Besides, Ahura Mazda's offering sacrifices unto other beings turns out a source of help to them. Tishtrya in his distress looks to Ahura Mazda for help. Mazda, thereupon, sacrifices unto him, which gives Tishtrya renewed vigour and strength to fight his adversary Apaosha.[5]

Ceremonial implements, textual passages, and objects and expressions that share invocation. In common with the Vedas, the Avestan texts deify the ritual implements, textual passages of the scriptures, and other like objects. The expressions of invocation and sacrifice applied to them are the same as those used in honour of Ahura Mazda, the Amesha Spentas, and the Yazatas. The following are the objects that come in for a share of invocation in the ritual: Haoma, Aesma or the wood for the fire altar,[6] Baresman or the sacred twigs, Zaothra or libations, one's own soul and Fravashi,[7] the Gathas, the chapters of the Yasna Haptanghaiti,[8] metres, lines, words of the chapters of the Haptanghaiti,[9] intellect, conscience,[10] knowledge,[11] and even sleep.[12] Thus the creator and his creature, angel and man, ceremonial implements and scriptural texts are all alike made the objects of adoration and praise.

Zarathushtra's monologues in the Gathas as against his dialogues in the Avesta. In the Gathas the prophet addressed several questions to Ahura Mazda, but the replies were left to be inferred from the context. An advance is made upon this method, and now we have Zoroaster depicted as putting questions, and Ahura Mazda himself as answering them categorically. To invest their compositions with divine sanction and prophetic authority, the later sages wrote in the form of a dialogue between

[4] Yt. 8. 52; 10. 1.
[5] Yt. 8. 25-29.
[6] Ys. 6. 18; 7. 26.
[7] Ys. 59. 28; 71. 18.
[8] Ys. 71. 12, 18.
[9] Vsp. 16. 3.
[10] Yt. 13. 74.
[11] Ys. 22. 25; 25. 6; Yt. 2. 1; Sr. 1. 2, 29; 2. 2, 29.
[12] Vsp. 7. 3.

Ahura Mazda and his prophet. The greater part of the Vendidad and some of the Yashts are composed in this style. Escorted by the celestial Yazatas, Ahura Mazda comes down to Airyana Vaejah to attend a meeting of mortals convened by Yima, and warns him of the coming destructive winter and frost.[13]

The Avesta looks with unrelenting abhorrence upon idols and images of divinities. Idolatry in any form is sin. The Shah Namah abounds in passages depicting the Persian kings and heroes as conducting a crusade against idols and idol-worship. The conquering armies of Persia always destroyed the idols and razed their temples to the ground. Herodotus writes that the Persians did not erect idols.[14] Sotion adds that they hated idols.[15] The statues of different divinities were, however, not unknown among the Achaemenians. The winged figure floating over the head of Darius on the rock sculptures at Behistan is probably a representation of Auramazda. We have it on the authority of Berosus that the Achaemenian king Artaxerxes Mnemon[16] had statues erected to Anahita in Babylon, Ecbatana, Susa, Persepolis, Bactria, Damascus, and Sardis.[17] Strabo describes the image of Omanus, that is, Vohu Manah, as being carried at a later period in procession in Cappadocia.[18]

We find no traces of such open disregard of the genuine teachings of the faith, when the priesthood firmly established its influence. Orthodox Zoroastrianism never sanctioned any form of idol-worship in Iran.

The Yazatas, or angels, Tishtrya, Verethraghna, Dahma Afriti, and Damoish Upamana introduce a novel feature in the theology of this period. They are pictured as assuming various forms of man, horse, and other objects in the performance of their allotted work.

[13] Vd. 2. 21, 22.
[14] 1. 131.
[15] Diogenes Laetius, *Proaem.* 6.
[16] B.C. 404-358.
[17] *Fragm.* 16, FHG. 2. 508, 509.
[18] P. 733.

CHAPTER XII

AHURA MAZDA

Ahura, Mazda, and Ahura Mazda. The name of God still retains its two elements separate. These have not yet coalesced into one word. In the metrical sections of the Younger Avesta the two elements are sometimes used apart from each other, or either one of the terms may be used to designate the Supreme Being, but in the prose compositions the collocation Ahura Mazda generally occurs as a compound phrase. In the formation of compounds, however, either Ahura or Mazda alone is used for the sake of convenience. The Ahura compounds such as *Ahura-dhāta,* 'created by Ahura,' *Ahura-tkaesha,* 'of the faith of Ahura,' or the adjectival form *āhuiri,* 'of Ahura,' invariably represent the divine lord Ahura Mazda. Similarly, the Mazda element in the compounds *Mazda-dhāta,* 'created by Mazda,' *Mazda-yasna,* 'worshipper of Mazda,' *Mazdo-frasāsta,* 'taught by Mazda,' *Mazdo-fraokhta* or *Mazdaokhta,* 'spoken by Mazda,' invariably stands for Ahura Mazda himself.

Ahura Mazda is the highest object of worship. Ahura Mazda still holds sovereign sway over both the worlds; his authority in the world of Righteousness is undisputed, and his imperial right is unchallenged. He is the greatest and the very best of the angels.[1] The Old Persian Inscriptions speak of him as the greatest of the divinities.[2] The archangels and angels dutifully carry out Mazda's orders. Reverence for him has never abated, and adoration of him does not languish with the advent again of the old Indo-Iranian divinities. He is yet the sublimest goal of human aspiration. The best of all sacrifices and invocations are those of Mazda.[3]

The Achaemenian kings most devoutly ascribe all their greatness and success to Auramazda.[4] Darius says with fervent piety that Auramazda made him king and enabled him to hold

[1] Ys. 16. 1; Yt. 17. 16.
[2] Dar. Pers. d. 1; Xerx. Elv. 1; Xerx. Van. 1.
[3] TdFr. 28.
[4] Av. Ahura Mazda.

his vast kingdom firm. Everything that the king did or every glory that he achieved was by the will of the Lord. Every battle that he won and every army of the enemy that he routed was by the grace of Auramazda.[5] Xerxes zealously imitates his illustrious father and attributes everything of his to Auramazda, and invokes his protection for himself and his empire.[6] It is again Auramazda who brought the kingdom to Artaxerxes III.[7]

The faithful acknowledge their indebtedness to Ahura Mazda and devoutly offer to him their homage and sacrifice.[8] They worship him with the very life of the body,[9] and they long to reach him through the medium of fire, through the Good Mind, through Righteousness, and through the deeds and words of wisdom, as well as through good thoughts, good words, and good deeds.[10] Ahura Mazda in fact is implored to be their very life and limb in both the worlds.[11] It is through the Best Righteousness that the true in heart aspire to behold the Lord, to approach him, and to associate with him.[12] The attainment of the companionship and the Kingdom of Ahura Mazda is the pious wish of the supplicant.[13]

Mazda's titles. The Yasna sacrifice opens with the praise of Ahura Mazda and enumerates the following divine titles: maker, radiant, glorious, the greatest, the best, the most beautiful, the most firm, the most wise, of the most perfect form, the highest in righteousness, possessed of great joy, creator, fashioner, nourisher, and the Most Holy Spirit.[14] He is all-pervading. There is no conceivable place where he is not. Closer than the nose is to the ears, or the ears are to the mouth, is he to all that which the corporeal world thinks, speaks, and does.[15] He is the greatest temporal and spiritual lord.[16] He is the absolute ruler.[17] He is the most mighty and righteous.[18] He is the maker, the most holy, the most wise, and the best one to answer when questioned.[19] His is the omniscient wisdom.[20] He

[5] Bh. 1. 5-9, 13, 14, 18, 19; 2. 20, 25-31, 33, 35; 3. 36, 38, 41, 42, 45, 46; 4. 50, 52, 54, 56-59, 62, 63; 5. 72, 75; Pers. d. 1-3; e. 2; NR. a. 1, 3-5; b. 1; Elv. 1; Sz. c. 1.
[6] Pers. a. 1, 3, 4; b. 1, 3; c. 1, 3; d. 1, 3; Elv. 1; Van. 1, 3.
[7] Pers. a. 1.
[8] Ys. 13. 5.
[9] Ys. 37. 3.
[10] Ys. 36. 1, 4, 5.
[11] Ys. 41. 3.
[12] Ys. 60. 12.
[13] Ys. 40. 2; 41. 2, 5, 6.
[14] Ys. 1. 1.
[15] TdFr. 58, 59.
[16] Ys. 27. 1; Vsp. 11. 21.
[17] Ys. 21. 3.
[18] Ys. 56. 1.
[19] Vd. 18. 7, 13, 66.
[20] Vsp. 19. 1.

is omniscient and never sleeping.[21] Radiant and glorious are the most frequent epithets with which the texts open the invocation to the divinity. Above all Ahura Mazda is the spirit of spirits.[22] This essential trait stands intact through all changes in the concept of God. He is not invested with any anthropomorphic character, even though there may linger some reminiscent phases of the sky-god such as belong to all inspired religions; and his multifarious epithets are truly the figurative expressions of human language used by man in his feeble attempt to give vent to an outburst of the feelings of devotion and reverence for his Heavenly Father. Ahura Mazda is synonymous with light, even as his opponent is identical with darkness, and the sun is spoken of as his most beautiful form.[23] In still another passage the sun is called the eye of Ahura Mazda.[24] Speaking about the nature of Ahura Mazda, Plutarch well remarks that among objects of sense the Zoroastrian godhead most of all resembles the light.[25-26] The star-spangled heaven is his garment;[27] the holy spell is his soul.[28] Many are the names by which mankind have learnt to know him. The first Yasht, which is dedicated to him, enumerates seventy-four of these attributes. They are all descriptive of his wisdom, power, righteousness, justice, and mercy.[29]

Only the world of righteousness is created by Ahura Mazda. As the antithesis between the Deity and the Evil Spirit is now most strongly marked in the Later Avesta, the godhead is expressly described as the creator of everything that is good,[30] evil being the counter-creation of Angra Mainyu. Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu in the younger texts are described as creating good and evil in turn. The archangels are Mazda's creations;[31] so also are the angels and men, the animals, sky, water, trees, light, and earth.[32] Closely parallel to Ys. 37. 1, which enumerates Ahura Mazda's earthly creation, the Old Persian Inscriptions state that Auramazda has created this earth,

[21] Vd. 19. 20.
[22] Ys. 4. 7.
[23] Ys. 36. 6; 58. 8.
[24] Ys. 1. 11.
[25-26] Is. et Os. 46.
[27] Yt. 13. 3.
[28] Yt. 13. 81.
[29] Yt. 1. 7, 8, 12-15.
[30] Ys. 71, 10; Vsp. 11. 5; Vd. 11. 1.
[31] Yt. 1. 25.
[32] Ys. 1. 1, 2, 12; 17. 12; 37. 1; Vsp. 7. 4; Vd. 19. 35; 21. 4, 8, 12; Aog. 30.

yonder heaven, man, and peace for man.[33] In the various inquiries which Zarathushtra addresses to Ahura Mazda in the Vendidad, the divinity is portrayed as the creator of the corporeal world. Ahura expressly says to Zarathushtra that he has created everything in the world, and yet nothing in his creation comes up to the level of man, who is the greatest and the best of all creations.[34] Through the wisdom of Ahura Mazda the world has come into being, and through his divine wisdom it will come also to an end.[35]

Spenta Mainyu, or the Holy Spirit. The relation between Ahura Mazda and his Holy Spirit remains as subtle in the Younger Avestan texts as it was in the Gathas. We have already seen in the treatment of this highly abstract concept, as it is portrayed in the Gathic texts, that Spenta Mainyu either designated Ahura Mazda as his divine attribute, or it occurred as a being separate from the godhead. The Later Avestan texts, it seems to us, lead us to the idea that Spenta Mainyu has no independent existence apart from Ahura Mazda, in other words that the Holy Spirit is not a personal being. The Later Avesta, moreover, as we shall see in the subsequent pages, teaches that all earthly and heavenly beings belonging to the Kingdom of Goodness, including Ahura Mazda himself, have their Fravashis, or Guardian Spirits. Spenta Mainyu alone in the realm of the good is without his Guardian Spirit. Furthermore, Spenta Mainyu does not receive homage and invocation from man, as do Ahura Mazda, the Amesha Spentas, and the Yazatas. Spenta Mainyu, therefore, may be taken as an attribute of Ahura Mazda which is either conjointly used with the godhead as his distinguishing epithet, or occurs alone by itself to designate the Supreme Being. In this latter use, it may be said, Spenta Mainyu represents Ahura Mazda, in the same manner as the royal title 'His Majesty' is frequently used as a substitute for the name of a king.

In contradistinction to the evil creation of Angra Mainyu, or the Evil Spirit, the Avestan texts speak of the good creation as belonging to Spenta Mainyu, the Holy Spirit.[36] The stars

[33] Dar. Pers. g. 1; NR. a. 1; Elv. 1; Sz. c. 1; Xerx. Pers. a. 1; b. 1; c. 1; d. 1; Elv. 1; Van. 1; Art. Oc. Pers. 1.
[34] Aog. 30.
[35] Yt. 1. 26.
[36] Ys. 57. 17; Yt. 11. 12; 13. 76; 15. 3, 43, 44; Vd. 3. 20; 13. 1, 2, 5, 6, 16.

also are spoken of as the creatures of the Holy Spirit.[37] Characteristic of the highly developed type of dualism of the Younger Avestan period, we find that the two rival spirits divide their sphere of influence in regard to the wind, or Vayu. The moderate wind that is conducive of good is called the wind of Spenta Mainyu,[38] and only to this good part of Vayu are the faithful to offer sacrifice.[39] Snavidhka, a tyrant foe of the Iranian hero Keresaspa, haughtily exclaims that if he ever grew to manhood he would make the heavens his chariot, convert the earth into a wheel, bring down Spenta Mainyu, or the Holy Spirit, from the shining paradise, and make Angra Mainyu, or the Evil Spirit, rush up from the dreary hell, and compel them to draw his chariot.[40] In a couple of instances Ahura Mazda is depicted as speaking of the Holy Spirit as apart from himself. Speaking about the great work of the Fravashis, or the Guardian Spirits, Ahura Mazda says that had not the Fravashis helped him, the wicked Druj would have smitten the good creation, and it would never have been possible for Spenta Mainyu to deal a blow to Angra Mainyu.[41] Ahura Mazda sacrifices unto Vayu and asks from this angel of wind a boon, that he may smite the creation of Angra Mainyu, but that none may smite the creation of Spenta Mainyu.[42]

The superlative forms, Spentotema Mainyu, or Spenishta Mainyu, meaning the Most Holy Spirit, are spoken of as Ahura Mazda's attributes.[43]

[37] Ys. 1. 11; Yt. 12. 32.
[38] Ys. 25. 5.
[39] Yt. 15. 5, 42, 57.
[40] Yt. 19. 43, 44.
[41] Yt. 13. 12, 13.
[42] Yt. 15. 2, 3.
[43] Ys. 1. 1; 37. 3; Yt. 1. 1.

CHAPTER XIII

AMESHA SPENTAS

The archangels. The higher celestial beings that had not expressly acquired a distinguishing name of their own in the Gathas are now designated as the Amesha Spentas, or 'Holy Immortal Ones.' They are thus addressed for the first time in the Haptanghaiti, or the Yasna of Seven Chapters, the earliest prose composition of the Avestan period, though still made in the Gathic dialect.[1] They are all created by Ahura Mazda.[2] Plutarch refers to them in his work.[3] With the godhead at the pinnacle they form a heptad and are henceforth mentioned as the seven Holy Immortal Ones.[4] Severally they are both male and female.[5] Vohu Manah, Asha Vahishta, and Khshathra Vairya are conceived of as masculine beings, though neuter in grammatical gender; Spenta Armaiti is pictured as a feminine concept; and Haurvatat and Ameretat are treated as masculine beings, though their grammatical gender is feminine. In a paramount degree they are all of one thought, one word, and one deed; their father and lord is the creator Ahura Mazda.[6] They look into one another's souls;[7] and they each have their special Fravashi.[8] Garonmana, the highest heaven, is their dwelling-place, and there they occupy the golden seats that belong to spirits in the realm supernal.[9] Their sacred names are the most mighty, most glorious, and the most victorious of the spells.[10] To utter their name is synonymous with efficacy and power. Yasht 2 is devoted to their praise.

Their attributes. The Amesha Spentas are the ever-living and the ever-helping ones;[11] they are the wise ones, and good

[1] Ys. 39. 3; 42. 6.
[2] Yt. 1. 25.
[3] Is. et Os. 47.
[4] Yt. 2. 13; 13. 83; 19. 16.
[5] Ys. 4. 4; 24. 9; 39. 3; Vsp. 9. 4.
[6] Yt. 13. 83; 19. 16.
[7] Yt. 13. 84; 19. 17.
[8] Ys. 23. 2.
[9] Vd. 19. 32, 36.
[10] Yt. 1. 3.
[11] Ys. 4. 4; 39. 3; Vsp. 9. 4; 11. 12.

rulers;[12] It is they that are the shining ones, of efficacious eyes, exalted, mighty, valiant, imperishable, and righteous.[13] They are the makers, rulers, fashioners, guardians, protectors, and preservers of the creation of Mazda,[14] and Mazda has given them beautiful forms.[15]

Their work. The archangels hold their celestial councils on the heights of the heavens.[16] From there they come down to the seven zones into which the world was divided according to the Avesta,[17] and rule over the realms of earth.[18] They are naturally invited to the sacrifice,[19] and offerings are placed by the devout for them to accept.[20] The faithful pray that the Amesha Spentas may visit and enjoy sacrifices in their houses,[21] for shining is the path by which they descend to earth to receive the libations offered in their honour.[22] Even Mithra as a god-like embodiment sacrificed unto them,[23] and for him they have made a dwelling.[24] They are of one accord with the sun;[25] and they gather together the light of the moon and pour it down upon the earth.[26] They are the divine ones who help in bringing about the final restoration of the world.[27] Each of them will smite his opponent at the time of the resurrection.[28]

Zarathushtra the first among mortals to sacrifice unto the Amesha Spentas. Mazda asks his prophet to invoke the Amesha Spentas, even though he could not behold them with his eyes.[29] Zarathushtra follows Mazda's behests; and he is the first man to invoke them,[30] a spiritual predecessor having been the archangel Sraosha. For that reason the faithful sacrifice unto the Amesha Spentas with love and joy,[31] and pray to them for help and protection.[32] Their praise and sacrifice form one of the cardinal articles of faith.[33] Hence it is that we find in the oft-repeated formulas of the Later Avestan texts that sacrifice,

[12] Ys. 2. 2; 6. 1; 24. 9; 25. 4; 35. 1; 58. 5; 70. 1; Vsp. 8. 1; 11. 12; Vd. 19. 9.
[13] Ys. 26. 3; Yt. 13. 82.
[14] Ys. 58. 5; Yt. 19. 18; Vd. 19. 9
[15] Yt. 13. 81.
[16] G. 2. 8.
[17] Ys. 57. 23; Yt. 11. 14.
[18] Vd. 19. 13.
[19] Ys. 1. 2.
[20] Ys. 4. 2.
[21] Ys. 60. 6.
[22] Yt. 13. 84; 19. 17.
[23] Yt. 10. 89.
[24] Yt. 10. 51.
[25] Yt. 10. 51; 13. 92.
[26] Yt. 7. 3.
[27] Yt. 19. 19.
[28] Yt. 19. 96.
[29] Vd. 19. 13.
[30] Yt. 17. 18.
[31] Ys. 15. 1; Vsp. 6. 1.
[32] Ys. 58. 5.
[33] Ys. 12. 1.

invocation, propitiation, and glorification are offered to them for the furtherance of prosperity in the world of righteousness.[34] Nor must it be forgotten that in his benedictions upon King Vishtaspa the prophet invokes upon his royal patron the blessings of brightness, glory, riches, swift horses, and good sons that come as a benign gift from the archangels.[35] The ceremonials performed in honour of the Amesha Spentas by unholy priests delight them not;[36] on the other hand, distress and harm flee from that worshipper whose homage has reached them.[37] When their loving votary performs his devotions and finds his spirit inflamed by their love, he forthwith dedicates to them the very life of his body and all his earthly possessions.[38]

Vohu Manah

His place in the Later Avesta. As the first in the creation of Ahura Mazda, Vohu Manah retains his pre-eminent position in the Later Avestan period. He occupies his seat next to Ahura Mazda in the celestial council. The other archangels live in him.[39] In some cases Vohu Manah does not stand as the name of the archangel, but simply connotes its ordinary meaning good mind or thought. In fact, as in the Gathas, there is a subtlety of meaning that makes it difficult to decide in translation whether the concept or the archangel is intended. In Vd. 19. 20, 23-25 the term designates a good man or even clean clothes.

Vohu Manah guards wisdom. Vohu Manah's *khratu*, or wisdom, which occurs in the Gathas, is now classified in the later texts into two distinct types, *āsna khratu*, 'innate wisdom,' and *gaoshosruta khratu*, 'acquired wisdom.' These two types of knowledge are spoken of as objects worthy of sacrifice and propitiation.[40] Ahura Mazda accordingly asks Zarathushtra to seek knowledge all the night long,[41] because the true priest and his disciples work by day and by night for the increase of knowl-

[34] Ys. 52. 4.
[35] Yt. 24. 46.
[36] Yt. 10. 139; 24. 12.
[37] Yt. 1. 24.
[38] Ys. 11. 18; 14. 1, 2; Vsp. 5. 2.
[39] Vsp. 11. 12.
[40] Ys. 22. 25; 25. 6; Yt. 2. 1; Sr. 1. 2, 29; 2. 2, 29.
[41] Yt. 24. 41.

edge.[42] Vohu Manah rejoices in man's endeavour to wrest from Nature her secrets.

His work. When the Evil Spirit first attacked creation Vohu Manah came to its succour.[43] Zarathushtra asks Ahura Mazda to teach him the laws of both the worlds, so that men following his precepts may act in such a way that Vohu Manah may come to them.[44] It is through his medium that the devout can aspire to reach Ahura Mazda;[45] and on that account he is implored to further bodily life.[46] It is said, moreover, that he is more a possession of the hard-working man of the world, who has married and toils for his family, than of that of the celibate or the ascetic.[47] Vohu Manah's function of guarding the animal kingdom is not emphasized in the Avestan texts.

Vohu Manah welcomes the righteous souls to paradise. When the blessed ones cross the great bridge and come up to the gates of heaven, this premier angel rises from his golden throne and in gracious words receives the newcomers.[48]

In the final conflict between the hosts of the rival powers, he will smite his adversary Aka Manah.[49]

Asha Vahishta

His righteousness remains the basic doctrine of Zoroastrianism during the Later Avestan period. Ahura Mazda is the righteous lord of righteousness.[50] He has created Asha Vahishta, or Best Righteousness,[51] who is the greatest, best, fairest, the radiant, the all-good archangel.[52] It is Asha Vahishta that is the smiter of disease, death, fiends, sorcerers, noxious creatures, and whose adversary is Druj, Deceit or Wickedness.[53] Zarathushtra for that reason proclaims the glory of Asha Vahishta, through whom the way to the abode of the archangels, paradise, becomes easy.[54] This celestial personification gives joy to the souls of the righteous dead.[55] It is through him that the devotee aspires to behold and reach Ahura Mazda.[56] There is one path alone that

[42] Vd. 4. 45; 18. 6.
[43] Yt. 13. 77.
[44] Yt. 1. 20.
[45] Ys. 36. 4.
[46] Ys. 68. 23.
[47] Vd. 4. 48.
[48] Vd. 19. 31.
[49] Yt. 19. 96.
[50] G. 5. 5.
[51] Yt. 1. 25.
[52] Ys. 13. 8; 37. 4; Yt. 13. 91, 92.
[53] Yt. 3. 14-17.
[54] Yt. 3. 3.
[55] TdFr. 72-74.
[56] Ys. 60. 12.

leads to the eternal life, and that is the Path of Righteousness.[57] The faithful invoke the holy waters of Ahura Mazda for the attainment of this path which is the most upright and which leads to the paradise of the righteous.[58] Atar, the genius of fire, leads to this straightest path all those who lie not unto Mithra.[59] Referring to the guilty persons who have undergone punishments for the crime of assaulting other persons, the Vendidad[60] admonishes sinners to walk in the path of righteousness in future. 'The path of righteousness' or 'the most upright path' of the Avestan texts closely resembles 'the right path' mentioned in the Old Persian Inscriptions. Darius exhorts men not to leave the path which is right.[61]

Zarathushtra was the first among mortals to praise this embodiment of holiness;[62] and King Vishtaspa, by adopting the new faith, helped to open the way for righteousness in this world.[63] Good thoughts of the mind, good words of the tongue, and good deeds of the hand make man *ashavan,* or righteous.[64] He obtains purity when he cleanses his own self with them.[65] The friendship of Asha in this world and the next is the most coveted boon for all time.[66] It is easy to understand why Asha is invoked to enter the house of the faithful to smite the wicked Druj.[67]

Righteousness is the highest riches. Man, we are told, pines for the riches of the earth and often strives to obtain the boon of wealth even by unlawful means. On the contrary, he should rather aspire to a store of righteousness, which is the real and permanent wealth. When a man starts on a journey, he takes provisions and stores with him.[68] He takes care to provide himself with more goods than are his actual requirements.[69] How sad it is, then, that he should not furnish himself now, while it is time, with the spiritual stores of righteousness for the great journey which he will have one day to undertake and from which he will never return.[70] In the end cattle are dust; gold and silver are dross; even the body of man mingles with clay. Righteousness alone does not mingle with the dust, but survives the bodily death of man.[71] There comes a day or there

[57] Ys. 72. 11.
[58] Ys. 68. 13.
[59] Yt. 10. 3.
[60] Vd. 4. 43.
[61] NR. a. 6.
[62] Yt. 13. 88.
[63] Yt. 13. 99; 19. 93.
[64] TdFr. 57-59.
[65] Vd. 10. 19.
[66] Ys. 40. 2.
[67] Ys. 60. 5.
[68] Aog. 41.
[69] Aog. 42-44.
[70] Aog. 46-47.
[71] Aog. 84.

comes a night, when the master leaves his cattle, when the cattle leave their master and the soul leaves the body.[72] But righteousness, which is the greatest and the best of all riches, accompanies the soul after death.[73] Riches and fortune one cannot have for oneself, nor can one maintain form and beauty of body forever at will; but everyone can embrace righteousness and make it his own in this world.[74] The best man is the righteous man. He is not heroic who is not heroic in righteousness, he is not valiant who is not valiant in righteousness.[75] Life in departing leaves the richest empty in the midst of his abundance, if he lacks righteousness.

The world of righteousness, as against the world of wickedness. The universe is divided into two hostile camps. The righteous form a distinct world by themselves, and they are the favourite ones of Ahura Mazda. The men who have chosen to naturalize themselves as the citizens of the Kingdom of Wickedness form a separate world of their own. The texts in the Later Avesta speak of the *ashaono sti,* 'the world of the righteous man,' as opposed to the *drvato sti,* 'the world of the wicked fiend.' It is the faithful that work for the furtherance of the one, and for the destruction of the other.[76] The man that is holy rejoices in the prosperity of the former, just as he exults in the adversity of the latter.[77] He who does not gladden a righteous person who comes within his gates has no lasting or true joy. To be charitable to such a one is to attain paradise.[78] But again, he rejoices not who helps a wicked person that clamours for help. To help such an evil one is equivalent to hindering righteousness, inasmuch as he is wicked who is a source of goodness to the wicked.[79] A gift bestowed upon a righteous man is the best of all libations,[80] but not so when it is made to a wicked one. Refusing food to a demon-worshipper or a wicked one does not make one guilty.[81] The faithful pray that a righteous king may rule over them, but that a wicked one may be baffled and defeated.[82]

Bodily purity contributes to righteousness. Next to life the second best good for man is purity.[83] This is the dictum

[72] Aog. 51.
[73] Aog. 52.
[74] TdFr. 95-98.
[75] TdFr. 103, 104.
[76] Ys. 52. 4.
[77] Ys. 8. 8.
[78] TdFr. 107-109.
[79] Ys. 71. 13; TdFr. 110-112.
[80] Nr. 84.
[81] Nr. 18.
[82] Ys. 8. 6.
[83] Vd. 5. 21.

of the Gathas, and it is most consistently developed throughout the entire subsequent literature. It is the favourite theme on which the Zoroastrian theologians are never tired of expatiating. Purity of body is the most salient feature in the life of a Zoroastrian. It is rated higher than anything else. The problem of cleanness and uncleanness, purity and impurity, has evoked an extensive literature. The tenets of the faith in this respect have been worked out into a science of health. Bodily purity is indispensable to purity of mind. Cleanliness of body is an essential requisite for saintliness. The clean in body find it easy to be pure in mind, and the pure in heart have just a step to take to be holy in spirit.

Asha Vahishta comes to be regarded as the healing spirit of bodily diseases. As the many kinds of healers restore bodily health by herbs and drugs, and remove the tumours and cancers by knife and implements, so there are healers that heal through righteousness or by the holy spell. We shall speak later on, in its proper place, of the art of healing by means of the holy spell. The Yasht which receives its name after Asha Vahishta is in fact mostly consecrated to Asha Vahishta's associate Airyaman, the guardian genius of human health. Of all the healers, the Avestan texts announce the spiritual healer as the best one; it is he that heals the faithful through his own righteousness by means of the utterance of the holy spell.[84]

Asha Vahishta's relation to fire. In the Avestan liturgy Asha Vahishta is invoked together with Atar, the genius of fire.[85] Angra Mainyu, as the devil, exclaims that Zarathushtra burns him with Asha Vahishta, as if with molten metal.[86] This allegory of burning and annihilating the Evil Spirit through righteousness is taken literally in the later period of Zoroastrianism, where Asha Vahishta is identified at times with the household fire on the hearth. Such identification in the realms of matter and of spirit serves only to bring more into prominence the main tenets of Zoroaster's teachings in regard to Asha.

Khshathra Vairya

The change that the concept undergoes. The Gathic Khshathra now takes *vairya*, 'desirable,' as its standing epithet,

[84] Yt. 3. 6; Vd. 7. 44. [85] Ys. 1. 4; Sr. 1. 7; 2. 7. [86] Yt. 17. 20.

and hence both the terms combine to form the name of this archangel. This archangel of Ahura Mazda [87] gradually loses the abstract side of his nature in the Avestan texts. In the Gathic prose texts of the Yasna Haptanghaiti the abstract idea of the Divine Kingdom occurs but once. In this solitary passage the devout long for the everlasting kingdom of Ahura Mazda.[88] Throughout the Younger Avestan texts this abstract idea of the spiritual kingdom recedes into the background, or rather is entirely lost sight of. True, Khshathra Vairya is still occasionally invoked by name along with the other celestial beings, but his higher function as the genius of the sovereign power in the abstract entirely falls out.

Khshathra Vairya does not stand so much for the celestial riches of the Divine Kingdom in the world hereafter, as for earthly wealth. Materially Khshathra Vairya is the genius of metal, and his activity is now limited to guarding this concrete creation of God. Khshathra Vairya and the molten metal are invoked side by side.[89] In fact he very soon loses even this trait of his work; he is identified with metal and just becomes metal itself.[90]

As the genius of metal, Khshathra Vairya is the lord of earthly riches. He generously bestows his possessions on the poor. He is sometimes invoked in company of *marezhdika*, 'mercy,' [91] that is styled the protector of the poor. We can trace this relation of Khshathra Vairya as the merciful helper of the poor to the Ahuna Vairya formula.

Spenta Armaiti

Her position in the Avesta. As devotion personified on the abstract side, and as the genius of the earth on the concrete side, Spenta Armaiti, 'Holy Devotion,' retains her dual nature in the Younger Avesta. Through the medium of Devotion the faithful aspire to approach Ahura Mazda,[92] and in the Confession of Faith the pious follower of Zarathushtra chooses Devotion and yearns to make her his own.[93] Upon lifting up his devotional prayer the house-lord prays that she may enter

[87] Yt. 1. 25.
[88] Ys. 41. 2.
[89] Vsp. 20. 1; Yt. 2. 7; Sr. 1. 4; 2. 4.
[90] Yt. 10. 125; Vd. 9. 10; 16. 6; 17. 6.
[91] Yt. 2. 7; Sr. 1. 4; 2. 4.
[92] Ys. 13. 6; 39. 5.
[93] Ys. 12. 2.

his house and thus rout heresy.[94] The malice and harm of the wicked could be averted through her help.[95] She is the mother of Ashi Vanghuhi, or the genius of Good Piety,[96] while Rata, the guardian spirit of generosity, is invoked with her.[97]

From her position as the female genius of the earth,[98] Armaiti very soon becomes the earth herself. She is now more frequently spoken of as the earth than as the genius of the earth.[99] She wears the star-studded sky as her garment.[100]

Haurvatat and Ameretat

The dual archangels. These two Amesha Spentas are closely united to each other and generally occur together side by side.[101] Haurvatat has a Yasht consecrated to him, being invoked as the lord of seasons and years.[102] Ahura Mazda created Haurvatat for the help, joy, comfort, and pleasure of the righteous ones.[103] The man who invokes the name of Haurvatat as one of the archangels is able to smite the legion of demons.[104] The two, Haurvatat and Ameretat, together form the reward of the righteous after death,[105] while fire is invoked to grant the blessings of Haurvatat and Ameretat to its supplicants for help and joy.[106] The two archangels together will smite the demons of hunger and thirst during the final conflict between the forces of good and evil.[107]

Instances where the two archangels materially personify water and plants are not found in the Later Avestan texts. Examples, however, are not wanting, as is well known, in which they occur as meaning specifically water and plants in their healing effect on mankind.[108]

[94] Ys. 60. 5.
[95] Yt. 1. 28.
[96] Yt. 17. 16.
[97] Sr. 1. 5; 2. 5.
[98] Vd. 3. 35.
[99] Ys. 16. 10; Yt. 24. 50; Vd. 2. 10, 14, 18; 18. 51, 64.
[100] Yt. 13. 3.
[101] Ys. 1. 2; 3. 1; 4. 1; 6. 17; 7. 26; 8. 1; 58. 7; 70. 2; 71. 12; Vsp. 9. 5; Yt. 1. 25; 10. 92.
[102] Yt. 4. 0; Sr. 1. 6; 2. 6.
[103] Yt. 4. 1.
[104] Yt. 4. 2.
[105] Yt. 1. 25.
[106] Ys. 58. 7.
[107] Yt. 19. 96.
[108] Ys. 3. 1; 4. 1; 8. 1.

CHAPTER XIV

YAZATAS

The Zoroastrian angels. Next in rank to the Amesha Spentas come the Yazatas, literally meaning 'the adorable ones.' If the Amesha Spentas are the archangels in Zoroastrian theology, the Yazatas are the angels. They are numbered by hundreds and by thousands,[1] by tens of thousands and by hundreds of thousands, nay even more.[2-3] About forty only, however, are mentioned in the extant Avestan texts. Plutarch refers to twenty-four.[4] The prominent Yazatas mentioned by name in Ys. 16. 4-6; Sr. 1. 8-30; 2. 8-30, closely correspond to the number mentioned by the Greek writer. Several of the Yazatas have individually consecrated to them a Yasht, or hymn of praise, which narrates the doings and functions of its respective genius. Besides the Yashts that form a special biographical literature of these minor divinities, the whole Iranian literature is filled with the record of their achievements. Ahura Mazda himself is a Yazata, even as he is an Amesha Spenta. He is the greatest and the best Yazata.[5]

History of the Yazatas. Some of these Yazatas are, as we have already seen, pre-Zoroastrian and go back to the Indo-Iranian period; but with the exception of Sraosha, Atar, and Ashi, they do not appear in the Gathas, though frequent enough in the Later Avesta. In fact they permeate all the later texts, and form an indissoluble part of the Zoroastrian pantheon. We shall group them under two headings and distinguish those that are common to the Indians and the Iranians from those that are purely Iranian.

Indo-Iranian: Mithra, Airyaman, Haoma, Verethraghna, Parendi, Rata, Nairyosangha, Apam Napat, Ushah, and Vayu.

Iranian: Atar, Ardvi Sura Anahita, Hvarekhshaeta, Maonghah, Tishtrya, Drvaspa, Sraosha, Rashnu, Raman, Daena, Chisti,

[1] Yt. 6. 1.
[2-3] Vsp. 8. 1.
[4] Is. et Os., 47.
[5] Ys. 16. 1; Yt. 17. 16.

Erethe, Rasanstat, Ashi Vanghuhi, Arshtat, Asman, Zamyat, Manthra Spenta, Damoish Upamana, and Anaghra Raocha.

Characteristics of the Yazatas. Like their celestial elders, the Amesha Spentas, the Yazatas impersonate abstract ideas and virtues, or concrete objects of nature. Many of them preside over both spiritual and material phenomena. The nature Yazatas Hvarekhshaeta, Mithra, Maonghah, Ardvi Sura, Atar, and others personify the sun, light, moon, water, and fire. At times their names designate merely the objects of nature that they personify. This simultaneous treatment of the dual aspect of these angels is frequently found in one and the same paragraph and makes it difficult to distinguish the actual impersonations from the personified objects. Very often praise and sacrifice are offered more to the sun, light, moon, water, and fire as such than to the Yazatas presiding over them. We learn from Herodotus that the Persians sacrificed unto the sun, moon, earth, fire, water, and winds.[6]

Instances are not wanting in which a Yazata begins his career as the personification of some one particular virtue or an object of nature, but with the lapse of time either substitutes for it some other or widens his sphere of activity and takes some new virtue in the abstract or some new object of nature under his guardianship in addition to his original duty. Some of the Yazatas are lacking in real individuality. Once, at least, even the prophet Zarathushtra is called a Yazata.[7]

The functions of the Yazatas. Various are the boons that the Yazatas give unto man.[8] By hundreds and by thousands they gather together the light of the sun and pour it upon the earth.[9] Men invoke them with sacrifices,[10] and in return they help men. They have a share of invocation and sacrifice offered unto Ahura Mazda, who is not jealous of the oblations thus dedicated to his subordinates. They are the beneficent ones,[11] full of glory and healing.[12] Apart from the general work which the Yazatas perform as a class of spiritual beings, they are severally allotted different functions, which we shall notice under their respective headings.

Offerings and sacrifices to the Yazatas. Libations of milk

[6] Herod. 1. 131.
[7] Ys. 3. 21.
[8] Ys. 65. 12, 14.
[9] Yt. 6. 1; Ny. 1. 11.
[10] Yt. 8. 11.
[11] Ys. 25. 8.
[12] Ny. 3. 11.

and Haoma, of the Draonah, or wafer-bread, and of meat are the objects generally dedicated to the angels, who always demand that man shall not forget their invocation and praise. They are ever eager to protect and help man in peace or war, provided that man propitiates them with offerings and sacrifices. To Anahita, as celestial guardian of the waters, to Drvaspa, who protects cattle, and to Vayu, the wind, as we shall see below, a hundred horses, a thousand oxen, and ten thousand sheep are consecrated in sacrifice by some of the early kings and heroes. Much of what the Greek authors write regarding such Iranian sacrifices in antiquity has its parallels in the Later Avestan texts. Some of the angels seek consecrated cooked repasts of cattle and birds as offerings from their votaries. Generally the victims used in sacrifice were horses, camels, oxen, asses, stags, sheep, and birds, if we may judge from Athenaeus 4, p. 145. Xerxes is said to have sacrificed a thousand cows to the Trojan Athena, while the Magi offered at the same time libations to the manes of the heroes.[13] When that Achaemenian monarch came to the river Strymon, the Magi offered a sacrifice of white horses.[14]

Speaking about the mode of sacrificing animals to the divinities, Herodotus tells us that the sacrificial beast was taken to a clean place by the sacrificer, who covered his head with wreaths of myrtle. When the victim was slaughtered and the pieces of meat were placed on grass, the Magi consecrated them by chanting the theogony.[15]

Division of the Yazatas according to their grammatical gender. The Yazatas are both males and females, or rather the personifications of virtues and ideas that are in gender masculine and feminine. There is no distinction between these male and female divinities. Both of them are on the same level, occupy the same place of honour, and receive the same amount of homage. The gentle work becoming to the fair sex is allotted to the female angels, and they are as powerful and awe-inspiring in their own sphere of activity as their fellow-workers of the opposite sex are in theirs. The female angels are: Ushah, Zam, Ardvi Sura Anahita, Drvaspa, Daena, Chisti, Arshat, Erethe, Rasanstat, Ashi Vanghuhi, Parendi, and Rata. All others are of the male sex.

Group Yazatas. The usual manner of sacrificing unto the

[13] Herodotus, 7. 43. [14] Herod. 7. 113. [15] Herod. 1. 132.

angels is to invoke each one separately by his name, or in company of his comrades and co-workers, or in joint pairs. On this last point we shall speak anon under a separate heading. Sometimes all the angels are invoked in a group under the comprehensive title of *vispe Yazata,* 'all Yazatas,'[16] closely corresponding to the Vedic *vishve Devas,* 'all Divinities.' In fact an entire book of the ritual is dedicated to the various spiritual lords under the title Visparat, literally meaning 'all lords.'

Dual Yazatas. A particular feature common to the Avestan and Vedic religions is the arrangement of certain divinities in pairs, who are revered together. As some of the Yazatas guard more than one abstract virtue or impersonate more than one natural phenomenon, it is not uncommon to find one Yazata entering into partnership with various Yazatas according to the nature of his work. For instance, Mithra as the sovereign lord of wide pastures forms a pair with Ahura; as the lord of light, he works in consort with Hvarekhshaeta, the genius of light; as the lord of truth, he works in company with Rashnu; and as the lord of plenty and prosperity, he enters into a comradeship with Raman. The more prominent of the dual divinities are Ahura-Mithra,[17] Hvarekhshaeta-Mithra,[18] Mithra-Rashnu,[19] Mithra-Raman,[20] Rashnu-Arshtat,[21] Raman-Vayu,[22] Daena-Chisti.[23] Ashi Vanghuhi-Parendi,[24] and Asman-Zamyat.[25] Sometimes a special attribute of one Yazata is extended to his associate, and they share the characteristic qualities and functions of each other.

Classification of the Yazatas. The Avestan texts generally speak of two distinct orders of the Yazatas. They are *mainyava,* 'spiritual, or celestial,' and *gaethya,* 'material, or terrestrial.'[26] We are not, however, informed what particular Yazatas are grouped under each of the two classes. A very recent gloss in the Pahlavi version of the Avestan Litany Khurshid Nyaish ex-

[16] Ys. 1. 19; 2. 18; Yt. 11. 17; 17. 19; WFr. 5. 1.
[17] Ys. 1. 11; 2. 11; Ny. 1. 7; 2. 12; Yt. 10. 113, 145.
[18] Yt 6; Ny. 1. 2.
[19] Vsp. 7. 2; Yt. 13. 47, 48; 14. 47; 24. 52; Vd. 4. 54.
[20] Ys. 2. 3; 25. 4; Vsp. 2. 9; Vd. 3. 1; G. 1. 2, 7, 8; Sr. 1. 16; 2. 16.
[21] Ys. 1. 7; 2. 7; Yt. 10. 139; 12. 40; Sr. 1. 18; 2. 18.
[22] Ys. 16. 5; Sr. 1. 21; 2. 21.
[23] Ny. 1. 8; 2. 8; Sr. 1. 24; 2. 24.
[24] Ys. 13. 1; Yt. 8. 38; 10. 66; 24. 8; Sr. 1. 25; 2. 25.
[25] Ys. 1. 16; 16. 6; 42. 3.
[26] Ys. 1. 19; 3. 4; 7. 4; 16. 9; 22. 27; 25. 8; 71. 5; Yt. 6. 4; 19. 22; Ny. 1. 9; WFr. 1. 2.

plains that the terrestrial angels are such as Fire, Ardvi Sura's Waters, the Wind, the Sun, the Moon, and the Earth. These are so called, adds the commentator, because they can be seen by man with his eyes, whereas the celestial ones cannot thus be seen.[27]

In the following tabulation we shall class the Yazatas under two main divisions. Those Yazatas who commonly work for one and the same virtue, or preside over some one particular phenomenon, will be classed under the sub-titles of such a virtue or a phenomenon common to them. Thus, for example, all the Yazatas that guard rectitude will be treated in one group, and those that preside over light will be dealt with together. In cases where a Yazata presides over more than one virtue, we shall class this particular angel under the most prominent and characteristic of his virtues.

Celestial Yazatas

Divine wisdom: Daena, Chisti, and Sraosha.
Rectitude: Mithra, Rashnu, Arshtat, Erethe, and Rasanstat.
Victory: Verethraghna.
Felicity: Raman.
Charity: Rata.
Peace: Akhshti.
Spell: Manthra Spenta, Dahma Afriti, Damoish Upamana.
Health: Airyaman, Haoma.
Riches: Ashi Vanghuhi, Parendi.
Cattle: Drvaspa, Geush Urvan.

Terrestrial Yazatas

Light: Hvarekhshaeta, Maonghah, Anaghra Raochah, Asman, Ushah; (star-Yazatas) Tishtrya, Vanant, Satavaesa, and Haptoiringa.
Wind: Vayu.
Fire: Atar, Nairyosangha.
Water: Ardvi Sura Anahita, Apam Napat, and Ahurani.
Earth: Zam.

[27] Cf. Dhalla, *Nyaishes,* p. 35, New York, 1908.

Daena

Religion deified. One of the least personified Yazatas is Daena, even though she is a female divinity of religion. Very little is known of her personality more than the fact that she is the genius of the Holy Law of Mazda. She has a Yasht assigned to her which is called after her name; and yet even this is entirely consecrated to Chisti, who is her usual associate. The offerings are made to her companion, and various boons are asked from her. Daena has no share in this. She is simply mentioned by name in invocation along with Chisti. Even here she is assigned a secondary place, for Chisti takes precedence over her. Throughout the Avestan texts in which the two are mentioned together, Daena stands second in the order of invocation.[28] Ashi Vanghuhi, or Good Piety, is her sister.[29]

Chisti

Divinity of religious wisdom. Unlike her partner, just mentioned, Chisti, the divinity of religious wisdom, has a personality that is sharply defined. She is the most upright, holy, bearing libations, wearing a white garment as her emblem.[30] Zarathushtra longs to own her and devoutly implores her to grant him, among other things, the clearest vision.[31] The prophet's noble consort Hvovi, as well as the itinerant priests and the lords of the country, are among her supplicants, asking various boons, which she grants to those who are pure in heart.[32]

Sraosha

His personality. Sraosha is one of the few angels whose prominence increases with the lapse of time. Two Yashts are dedicated to him, the latter of which occurs also in the Yasna. He is the angel whose name has reached afar and whose very body is the holy spell.[33] He was the first in the entire creation

[28] Ys. 22. 24; 25. 5; Sr. 1. 24; 2. 24; Ny. 1. 8.
[29] Yt. 17. 16.
[30] Yt. 10. 126.
[31] Yt. 16. 2-13.
[32] Yt. 16. 15, 17, 19.
[33] Ys. 3. 20; 4. 23; Yt. 13. 85; Vd. 18. 14.

to worship Ahura Mazda, the Amesha Spentas, and the two protectors.[34] He chanted the five holy Gathas of Zarathushtra in order to propitiate the archangels.[35] His dwelling is supported by a thousand pillars, is self-lighted from within, and star-spangled from without.[36] He drives forth in a heavenly chariot drawn by four white shining horses that are fleeter than the winds, fleeter than the rain, fleeter than the winged birds, and fleeter than the well-darted arrow.[37] The sacred formula Ahuna Vairya and the other consecrated spells are his weapons.[38] His sister is Ashi Vanghuhi, or Good Piety;[39] and unto him Haoma offered sacrifice.[40] Owing to his victorious courage and wisdom the archangels come down to the seven zones.[41]

Sraosha's attributes. He is the strongest, the sturdiest, the most active, the swiftest, and the most awe-inspiring of youths.[42] He is the wielder of the club, which is levelled against all demoniacal powers, especially against the fiendish Druj. He is mighty, swift, powerful, terrible, and heroic.[43] He is a formidable foe to the wicked. He is not afraid of any one, but the demons tremble at his sight and flee to the region of darkness.[44] His mace does havoc on them. Himself unconquerable, he is the conqueror of all.

The work of Sraosha. Mazda has revealed his religion to Sraosha, who now teaches it to the world of humanity.[45] This was the prime function, as we have seen above, that the Gathas allotted him. The Younger Avestan texts speak more of his all-absorbing work of combating the demons. In the Gathas he preached devout submission to Mazda's mandates, in the Later Avesta he does the fighting with the rebels that revolt against divine authority. Sleep has forsaken his eyelids since the two spirits Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu created the world.[46] With an uplifted club he guards the world after sunset from the onslaughts of Aeshma, his constant rival, and against all the forces of wickedness.[47] Three times during the day and three times during the night the holy Sraosha descends on earth

[34] Ys. 57. 2.
[35] Ys. 57. 8.
[36] Ys. 57. 21.
[37] Ys. 57. 27, 28.
[38] Ys. 57. 22.
[39] Yt. 17. 16.
[40] Ys. 57. 19.
[41] Ys. 57. 23.
[42] Ys. 57. 13.
[43] Ys. 57. 11, 12.
[44] Ys. 57. 18; Yt. 11. 13.
[45] Ys. 57. 24; Yt. 11. 14.
[46] Ys. 57. 17; Yt. 11. 12.
[47] Ys. 57. 10, 16; Yt. 11. 10, 11.

to smite the evil spirit Angra Mainyu, Aeshma, and the demons of Gilan and Mazandaran;[48] and he returns victorious from these battles to the celestial assembly of the archangels.[49] The Fire of the hearth calls Sraosha for help in the third part of the night, for the demon Azi threatens to extinguish his life.[50] Sraosha, thereupon, wakes up the cock Parodarsh, his ally, who lifts up his voice to rouse the world of humanity, and warns it against the mischief of Bushyansta, who lulls it to sleep.[51] With his terrible mace levelled at the head of Druj, he enters into controversy with her, and extorts from the demoness her secret devices.[52] As the teacher of religion unto men he moves about spreading religious lore at his will over the whole material world.[53]

Sraosha's gifts. He is implored to give strength to the spans of the warriors' steeds in battle, soundness of body, and power to meet the adversary.[54] The poor look to him for support.[55] The faithful entreat him to guard them in both the worlds.[56] The Mazdayasnians are asked to sacrifice unto him.[57] Evils of all kinds vanish from the house, clan, town, and country, wherein the righteous man thinking good thoughts, speaking good words, and doing good deeds, welcomes and sacrifices unto Sraosha.[58]

Mithra

His place in the Avestan pantheon. Of all the Indo-Iranian divinities that have found their place in the Zarathushtrian theology, Mithra is the most prominent figure. He is associated with the oldest common cult of Persia and India as shown in the sacred books of the two countries. He becomes one of the most popular Yazatas of Iran. Nay, more, he is the most conspicuous angel of the Younger Avestan period. One of the longest Yashts celebrates his greatness. He is the most masculine, exacting, implacable, and relentless of all the Yazatas. Ahura Mazda has created him as worthy of sacrifice and prayer as himself.[59] The description of him in the Yasht that is dedicated in his honour gives a vivid picture of the character of the pre-Zarathushtrian divinities that were worshipped in Iran.

[48] Ys. 57. 31, 32.
[49] Ys. 57. 12.
[50] Vd. 18. 22.
[51] Vd. 18. 23, 24.
[52] Vd. 18. 30-59.
[53] Ys. 57. 24.
[54] Ys. 57. 26.
[55] Ys. 57. 10; Yt. 11. 3.
[56] Ys. 57. 25.
[57] Ys. 57. 13.
[58] Ys. 57. 14.
[59] Yt. 10. 1.

Mithra was one of the most eminent of the primitive Ahuras, as he was conjointly worshipped with Ahura Mazda.[60] The writer who consecrated Yasht 10 in his honour was conversant with the past greatness of this divinity, whose cult had struck so deep a root in the popular mind. He certainly was unsparing in eulogizing the work of this genius in the universe. The texts sometimes speak of Mithra in terms that are usually applied to Ahura Mazda, and the latter himself is represented in this particular Yasht as having sacrificed unto Mithra.[61] The heptad of the Amesha Spentas having been already complete, Mithra is not raised to the rank of these higher beings, but is assigned a place among the Yazatas. The Old Persian Inscriptions of the Achaemenian kings mention a very limited number of the celestial beings. Mithra occupies a prominent place among these divinities. Artaxerxes Mnemon and Artaxerxes Ochus invoke Mithra for help and protection.[62] Plutarch says that the Persians call him 'the mediator,' for he stands between Oromazes and Areimanios.[63]

Mithra's attributes. Of all the Yazatas that rule over this earth, Mithra is the strongest, the most sturdy, the most active, the most swift, and the most victorious.[64] Ahura Mazda has created him the most glorious of all the spiritual Yazatas.[65] The composer of the Yasht who sings to his favourite divinity applies to him the same honorific epithets as are applied to the godhead. Mithra is called omniscient, which is strictly speaking the epithet of Mazda alone.[66] He is the strongest of the strong, the sturdiest of the sturdy, the most intelligent among the divinities, victorious, glorious, keeping ten thousand spies, heroic, all-wise, and the undeceivable one.[67] He is the greatest of the Yazatas, with body self-shining like the moon, and face as brilliant as Tishtrya.[68] He is heroic and the most beneficent one.[69] He is the lord, deep, courageous, weal-giving, sitting in the assembly, propitiated when invoked, exalted, of many devices, with a body made of spells, and a warrior of powerful arms.[70] He is the leader of hosts, of a thousand devices, lordly, ruling, the all-knowing one,[71] the one of good renown, of good form

[60] Ys. 1. 11; 2. 11; Yt. 10. 113, 145; Ny. 1. 7; 2. 12.
[61] Yt. 10. 123.
[62] Sus. a; Ham. b; Pers. 4.
[63] Is. et Os. 46.
[64] Yt. 10. 98, 135.
[65] Yt. 19. 35.
[66] Yt. 10. 24, 35.
[67] Yt. 10. 56, 141.
[68] Yt. 10. 142, 143.
[69] Yt. 10. 31, 56.
[70] Yt. 10. 25.
[71] Yt. 10. 35.

and glory, granting boons and pastures at his will, the giver of good, of ten thousand spies, heroic, and the all-knowing.[72] He is ever afoot, watchful, valiant, a dominating figure in the assembly, causing the waters to flow, listening to appeals, causing the trees to grow, ruling over the district, full of devices, a creature of wisdom.[73] He is the swiftest among the swift, generous among the generous, valiant among the valiant, chief among the chiefs of assembly, increase-giving, fatness-giving, flock-giving, kingdom-giving, son-giving, life-giving, felicity-giving, and piety-giving.[74] All these are among his attributes. Mithra is highly merciful,[75] the protector and guardian of all creatures.[76] He is both good and bad for men and nations. Peace and war between nations are from him.[77] Mithra is a warrior who has sharp spears, quick arrows,[78] and woe be to the man who has offended him, as noted below.

Mithra's associates. Among those who work in unison with Mithra, Ahura Mazda stands first; Mithra-Ahura are often invoked together as a couple. Their union is pre-Zarathushtrian and corresponds to the Vedic Mitra-Varuna. A detailed account of their joint activity is not found in the Avesta, but they are called the two exalted, imperishable, and holy ones,[79] and are invoked for special help.[80] Mithra is again jointly invoked with Hvarekhshaeta, the angel presiding over the sun. This is natural, because one of the chief functions of Mithra is to work as the guardian of light. Of the five Zoroastrian Nyaishes, or litanies, two are consecrated to the sun and Mithra, and these two are always recited together.[81] On the moral side Mithra protects truth. Consequently at an early date he is associated with Rashnu, who is the chief genius of truth.[82] They are united as two friends.[83] One of the principal attributes of Mithra is that he is the lord of wide pastures. In this capacity he joins in partnership with Rama Khvastra, who is essentially the angel that gives good pastures and happy dwellings, together with full joy of life.[84]

[72] Yt. 10. 60.
[73] Yt. 10. 61.
[74] Yt. 10. 65.
[75] Yt. 10. 140.
[76] Yt. 10. 54.
[77] Yt. 10. 29.
[78] Yt. 10. 102, 112.
[79] Ny. 1. 7; 2. 12; Yt. 10. 145.
[80] Yt. 10. 113.
[81] Ny. 1; 2; Yt. 6.
[82] Vsp. 7. 2; Yt. 13. 47, 48; 14. 47; 24. 52; Vd. 4. 54.
[83] Yt. 10. 79, 81.
[84] Ys. 2. 3; 25. 4; Vsp. 2. 9; Vd. 3. 1; G. 1. 2, 7, 8; Sr. 1. 16; 2. 16.

Mithra, the genius of light. On the material side Mithra presides over light, especially over the light that radiates from the sun, with the radiance of which he is identical on the physical plane. As the harbinger of light and herald of the dawn, Mithra precedes the rising sun on the summits of mountains.[85] The great vault of heaven is therefore Mithra's garment.[86] Ahura Mazda and the Amesha Spentas, being in one accord with the sun, have built up for Mithra a dwelling on the great mountain Hara Berezaiti (Alburz), where neither night nor darkness, nor cold wind or hot wind, nor sickness, impurity, death, and clouds can ever reach.[87] From this elysian abode Mithra surveys the whole universe at a glance. Sleepless and ever wakeful, he watches and spies the doings of men as an infallible sentinel of heaven. He has posted eight of his comrades as scouts on the celestial watch-towers to spy upon men's doings.[88] After the sun has set, Mithra traverses the world all around, and surveys all that is between earth and the heavens.[89] Ahura Mazda consequently has ordained that Mithra should watch from on high over the entire moving world.[90] The heat of Mithra it is, accordingly, that gives warmth and life to the plant world and bestows fertility upon this earth. Mithra, as a guardian genius in the celestial realm, therefore, superintends the vast expanse of the universe, because he is constantly spoken of as having a thousand ears and ten thousand eyes.[91] The brilliant sun is the lord of yonder heavens, who with his infinite rays of light pervades the whole world. Mithra furthermore receives in the Avesta the standing epithets *dainghu-paiti,* 'the lord of countries,' and *vouru-gaoyaoiti,* 'of wide pastures.' His light is the dispeller of darkness and of all the sin and evil concomitant with it. Nothing is secret from Mithra's penetrating gaze. He it is that is the undeceivable one.[92]

Mithra, the inveterate foe of falsehood. Yet after all, the greater and more important work of Mithra lies in the abstract sphere. At a very early date Mithra was styled the warder of truth. Light is synonymous with truth, as darkness is with falsehood. Mithra being primarily the lord of light, it was but a step from the physical to the moral sphere that he should

[85] Yt. 10. 13; Vd. 19. 28.
[86] Yt. 13. 3.
[87] Yt. 10. 50, 51.
[88] Yt. 10. 45.
[89] Yt. 10. 95.
[90] Yt. 10. 103.
[91] Yt. 10.
[92] Yt. 10. 24, 31, 56, 60, 61, 82, 141.

be depicted as impersonating truth. From the divine activity of Mithra, as portrayed in the Avestan texts, we gather more information of his aggressively active crusade against falsehood than of his work in upholding truth. In his warring capacity of lord of hosts, Mithra works more than all else to deal a destructive blow to the demon of falsehood, thereby strengthening the realm of truth.

To speak untruth was a heinous sin. Truth was a paramount virtue among the ancient Iranians. It was regarded as everything, it was religion. On this very account we see human evil collectively focused in the Avesta as the *druj*, 'Lie,' which corresponds to *drauga*, in the Old Persian Inscriptions of the Achaemenian kings, a conception almost like that of the devil. Herodotus writes that one of the first things that every Persian child was taught was to speak the truth.[93] Lying was most detested.[94] The testimony of the Avesta also is that the liar brings death to his country.[95] Lying unto Mithra brings to the offender the sin of being a deceiver of Mithra. The faithful is exhorted never to lie, for Mithra is unforgiving towards liars. Neither the lord of the house, nor the lord of the clan, nor the lord of the town, nor the lord of the country should ever lie unto this celestial being.[96] He is the protector and guardian of these lords, only so long as they lie not unto him.[97] If, however, they commit such a sin, Mithra is angered, and destroys house, clan, town, and the country, along with their masters and nobles.[98] Nor can these culprit lords escape him, for he overtakes them, no matter how swiftly they may run.[99] The man of little faith who thinks that he can evade Mithra and indulge in falsehood is mistaken;[100] to such a one Mithra gives neither strength nor vigour, glory nor reward,[101] but on the contrary, he inflicts dire punishment. Into the hearts of all such he strikes terror, taking away the strength of their arms, fleetness from their feet, the sight from their eyes, and the hearing from their ears;[102] it is he that hurls down their heads as he deals them death.[103]

Mithra the guardian of contracts. Ahura Mazda enjoins

[93] Herod. I. 136.
[94] Herod. I. 138.
[95] Yt. 10. 2.
[96] Yt. 10. 17.
[97] Yt. 10. 80.
[98] Yt. 10. 18.
[99] Yt. 10. 20.
[100] Yt. 10. 105.
[101] Yt. 10. 62.
[102] Yt. 10. 23, 48, 63.
[103] Yt. 10. 37.

upon Zarathushtra not to break the contract that is entered into with the righteous or with the wicked, for Mithra stands for both the righteous and the wicked.[104] In his rôle of genius of light he guards the sanctity of oaths, and the word *mithra* in the Avesta is frequently used as a common noun, meaning 'contract.'[105] For that reason, he who violates the oath, whether it be with a believer or a non-believer, feels the visitations of the stern angel's wrath. The crime of the one who thus violates a contract is called '*Mithra-druj*,' 'deceiving Mithra.' Such a criminal is heavily punished, and his guilt falls upon the shoulders of his kinsmen for years in the next world, making them answerable for it by punishment.[106] The ethics of thus holding a man's family and kinsmen responsible for his guilt seems to be a relic of the primitive type of group morality.

Mithra as a war divinity. Incidental allusion has been made above to Mithra as the lord of hosts. For that reason it is easy to comprehend the fact that warring nations invoke Mithra for help before going into battle; and the lord of hosts sides with that army which excels in offering sacrifice.[107] When Mithra marches out amid the hostile armies on the battlefield, he throws confusion into the camp of the enemy that has offended him;[108] and breaks asunder their lines of battle, striking terror in their entire array.[109] Though the enemy use arrows and spears, swords and maces, they nevertheless miss the mark in every case,[110] and, all the while, Mithra rushes destructively from a thousand directions against the foes.[111] The adversaries who have lied unto him he kills by fifties and hundreds, by hundreds and thousands, by thousands and tens of thousands, by tens of thousands and myriads.[112] Confusing their minds, he shatters their limbs, and breaks their bones asunder,[113] at the same time as he throws down their heads.[114] He enters the battlefield in person, and levels his club at both the horse and the rider.[115]

Mithra's chariot. Mithra goes forth on his daily round through the heavens and upon the earth driving in a celestial car that rolls upon one golden wheel, the sun, with a shining

[104] Yt. 10. 2.
[105] Yt. 10. 116, 117; Vd. 4. 2-16.
[106] Vd. 4. 5-10.
[107] Yt. 10. 8, 9.
[108] Yt. 10. 48.
[109] Yt. 10. 36.
[110] Yt. 10. 39-40.
[111] Yt. 10. 69.
[112] Yt. 10. 43.
[113] Yt. 10. 72.
[114] Yt. 10. 37.
[115] Yt. 10. 101.

axle.[116] Ahura Mazda made this chariot of heavenly substance and inlaid it with stars.[117] Like Sraosha's vehicle it is drawn by four white stallions that eat celestial food and are undying, shining, and spiritual.[118] When Mithra drives on aloft over the seven zones he is escorted on the left and the right, in front and from behind, by Sraosha; Nairyosangha, Ashi Vanghuhi, Parendi, Nairya Ham-Vareti, Kingly Glory, the sovereign sky, Damoish Upamana, Rashnu, Chisti, Atar, and the Fravashis.[119] With bows and arrows, spears and clubs, and with swords and maces placed by thousands in his chariot, this divine war lord plunges, mace in hand, into the field of battle, smiting and killing the wicked that have been false to him.[120] Even Angra Mainyu and the fiendish demons flee away in terror before Mithra.[121]

Mithra's wrath. Mithra bemoans with uplifted hands before Ahura Mazda the disregard and negligence of men who do not invoke him by his name, even though he protects and guards them.[122] If he were invoked by men, he says, as other angels are, he would come at the appointed time for help to the righteous.[123] He looks, therefore, for votaries who will sacrifice unto him, so that in his might he may shower gifts upon them.[124] Happy indeed is the man who thus gains the good-will of Mithra, for this divine angel henceforth bestows upon him radiance and glory, soundness of body, riches and weal, offspring, and sovereignty.[125] But woe is to him that is sparing in Mithra's invocation. For such a wight calamity is in store, as Mithra is terrible to deal with when his righteous wrath is kindled. Mithra, when angered or disregarded in worship, inflicts poverty and wretchedness upon the offender, depriving him also of his offspring and power.[126] The house, clan, town, and country in which an insult is offered to Mithra are levelled to the ground.[127] The wise therefore pray that they may never come across Mithra's wrath,[128] and invocation is the best means of appeasing the vengeful angel.

[116] Yt. 10. 136.
[117] Yt. 10. 143.
[118] Yt. 10. 68, 125.
[119] Yt. 10. 52, 66, 100, 126, 127.
[120] Yt. 10. 96, 127-132.
[121] Yt. 10. 97, 134.
[122] Yt. 10. 54.
[123] Yt. 10. 55, 74.
[124] Yt. 10. 108.
[125] Yt. 10. 108, 109.
[126] Yt. 10. 110, 111.
[127] Yt. 10. 28, 87.
[128] Yt. 10. 69, 98, 135.

Sacrifices to Mithra. The faithful devoutly invoke Mithra by his name with libations, and implore him to come and sit at the sacrifice, to listen to the invocation, to be pleased with it, to accept it, and to place it with love to their credit in paradise.[129] The Mazdayasnians are to sacrifice unto Mithra with cattle and birds, along with Haoma and libations.[130] The faithful who desires to drink the holy libations consecrated in honour of Mithra is required to undergo certain penances. He has to wash his body for three days and three nights and undergo thirty stripes, or he might wash his body for two days and two nights and undergo twenty stripes, as the occasion requires. Any one who has no knowledge of the ritual is prohibited from partaking of the sacred libation.[131] In these observances we can recognize the beginnings of the later Mithraic rites and mysteries for which the cult of Mithra, centuries afterwards, became famous. Mithra demands that his sacrifice shall be performed with out-and-out devotion. Ahura Mazda says unto Zarathushtra that if a sacrifice is offered unto Mithra by a holy and righteous priest, Mithra will be satisfied, and will straightway come to the dwelling of the supplicant, but if it is performed by an unholy priest, it is rejected, no matter how long has been the sacrifice, nor how many bundles of the sacred twigs are consecrated.[132] Mithra promptly comes to help when he is satisfied.[133] He brings sovereignty for him who has piously offered him libations,[134] and gives him a good abode with desirable possessions.[135]

Mithra's boons. Many indeed are the boons asked for from Mithra. He is invoked to come to the faithful for help, freedom, joy, mercy, healing, victory, well-being, and sanctification.[136] The masters of the house, clan, town, and country invoke him for help, so do the poor, when wronged, look to him for the redress of their grievances.[137] The husbandman solicits that rich pasture may never fail him. Horsemen sacrifice unto him even from on horseback and beg swiftness for their teams, vigour for their bodies, and might for overthrowing their adversaries.[138] Neither the spear of the foe nor his arrow hits the man whom Mithra helps,[139] for he guards and protects man from behind and in

[129] Yt. 10. 31, 32.
[130] Yt. 10. 119.
[131] Yt. 10. 120-122.
[132] Yt. 10. 137-139.
[133] Yt. 10. 87.
[134] Yt. 10. 16.
[135] Yt. 10. 77.
[136] Yt. 10. 5.
[137] Yt. 10. 83, 84.
[138] Yt. 10. 11, 94, 114.
[139] Yt. 10. 24.

front.[140] Mithra furthers the possessions of man, he gives flocks of cattle, male offspring, chariots, and prosperity;[141] he is therefore entreated to grant riches, courage, victory, good name and fame, felicity, wisdom, and strength to smite the adversaries.[142] Mithra's help, it may be added, is invoked for both the worlds.[143]

Rashnu

Personification of truth. This angel is pre-eminently the genius of truth. His standing epithet is *razishta*, 'most upright.' To adopt the phraseology of the Younger Avestan texts, Rashnu is the most holy, the most well-shaped, exalted, courageous, the most knowing, the most discerning, the most fore-knowing, the most far-seeing, the most helping, the greatest smiter of thieves and bandits.[144]

Rashnu presides at the ordeal court. The Yasht consecrated to Rashnu deals mainly with the preparation of the ordeal; and his presence at such trials is deemed indispensable.[145] In fact he is the chief celestial judge who presides at the ordeal. No specific habitat is assigned to Rashnu. The officiating priest has to invoke him to come to the ordeal from whatever part of the world he happens to be in at that time, whether in one of the seven zones of the habitable world, or on the great waters, or on some part of the wide earth, or on the high mountains, or on the stars and the moon and the sun, or in the endless light, or even in paradise.[146] The man who lies at the ordeal offends both Rashnu and Mithra, and is consequently punished.[147]

We have already seen how Rashnu is often invoked in company with Mithra, and likewise with Sraosha; in a similar manner, as noted in the next paragraph, we generally find Arshtat, the female personification of rectitude, invoked alongside of Rashnu.[148]

[140] Yt. 10. 46.
[141] Yt. 10. 28, 30.
[142] Yt. 10. 33, 34, 58, 59.
[143] Yt. 10. 93.
[144] Yt. 10. 126; 12. 5-7.
[145] See Dhalla, *The Use of Ordeals among the Ancient Iranians*, in *Le Muséon*, vol. 11, pp. 121-133, Louvain, 1910.
[146] Yt. 12. 9-38.
[147] Vd. 4. 54, 55.
[148] Ys. 1. 7; 2. 7; Yt. 10. 139; 12. 40; Sr. 1. 18; 2. 18.

Arshtat

Divinity of rectitude. Arshtat is the female genius of truth. She does not play any prominent part in the Younger Avestan period. She co-operates with Mithra, Sraosha, and Rashnu in the judgment of the dead. Although the 18th Yasht is dedicated to Arshtat and bears her name, there is not in it a single mention of her by name; the entire hymn treats only of the Aryan Glory. In two Sirozah passages (1. 26; 2. 26) Mount Ushidarena, literally meaning 'the keeper of intelligence,' is invoked in company with Arshtat; and tradition points to this mountain as the place where Zarathushtra retired to meditate on the eternal problems of life and commune with the divine. As noted above, Arshtat is generally invoked with Rashnu;[149] and she is called the world-increasing and the world-profiting.[150] In one instance she is identified with the Mazdayasnian religion.[151]

As conjectured by Foy,[152] and established by Jackson,[153] after a careful examination of the Old Persian Inscription on the Behistan rock (Bh. 4. 64), the name of this angel occurs in the very short list of Zoroastrian divinities known to the Achaemenian kings.

Erethe and Rasanstat

Minor divinities of truth. By the names of Erethe and Rasanstat are designated two minor female angels presiding over truth. Nothing is known about them excepting that they are invoked by name along with Chisti and Ashi Vanghuhi.[154]

Verethraghna

The angel of victory. Verethraghna belongs to the Indo-Iranian divinities. He is one of the most popular divinities of the Iranian cult. Verethraghna impersonates victory, and he has preserved this trait throughout the various epochs of Iranian religious thought. The Yasht bearing his name celebrates his

[149] Ys. 1. 7; 2. 7; Yt. 10. 139; 12. 40; Sr. 1. 18; 2. 18.
[150] Ys. 1. 7; 2. 7; Vsp. 7. 2; Yt. 10. 139; 11. 16; 13. 18.
[151] Vsp. 7. 2.
[152] KZ. 35. 45; ZDMG. 54. 364, n. 1.
[153] *Persia Past and Present*, p. 203-205, New York, 1906.
[154] Ys. 1. 14; Vsp. 9. 4; Sr. 1. 25.

exploits. As the genius of victory, and created by Ahura Mazda, Verethraghna is the best armed of the spiritual angels.[155] He is the most courageous in courage, the most victorious in victory, the most glorious in glory, the most abounding in favours, the best giver of welfare, and the most healing in health-giving.[156]

The patron angel of the Iranian countries. Verethraghna is one of the national divinities of the Aryans. If the nation sacrificed unto Verethraghna with libations, and the sacred twigs, and consecrated cooked repast of cattle, either white or of some other color, no hostile hordes, no plague, nor evil of any kind would enter the Aryan lands.[157] The sacrifice is to be offered through righteousness, and none but the righteous should partake of the holy food dedicated to Verethraghna. Untold calamity would befall the Aryan countries if the wicked should have a share in the sacred feast. In such an event plagues and foes would devastate the country and the Aryans would be smitten by their fifties and their hundreds, by their hundreds and their thousands, by their thousands and their tens of thousands, by their tens of thousands and their myriads.[158]

Verethraghna's work. The armies that meet on the battle-field invoke Verethraghna for victory. He favours that army which first seeks his help. The army that secures his aid is sure to conquer and not be conquered, it smites and is not smitten.[159] He breaks asunder the columns of the enemy, wounds them, shakes them, and cuts them to pieces.[160] He brings illness and death into the army that has lied unto Mithra, binds their hands and feet, and deprives them of their eyesight and hearing.[161] Zarathushtra sacrificed unto Verethraghna, imploring from him victory in thought, victory in word, victory in deed, victory in addressing, and victory in replying.[162] Verethraghna imparts to the prophet strength of the body and powerful vision of the eyes.[163]

His metamorphoses. Verethraghna, along with Dahma Afriti and Damoish Upamana, imports a peculiar aspect into the Iranian pantheon, that of assuming various shapes and manifesting his individuality in many forms. As the lord of victory he is ever ready to help those who invoke him, and comes down to

[155] Yt. 14, 1, 6, etc.
[156] Yt. 14. 3, 7, etc.
[157] Yt. 14. 48-50.
[158] Yt. 14. 51-53.
[159] Yt. 14. 43, 44.
[160] Yt. 14. 62.
[161] Yt. 14. 47, 63.
[162] Yt. 14. 28, 30, 32.
[163] Yt. 14. 29, 31, 33.

his votary under different guises. Ten of such forms of Verethraghna are mentioned, when he appeared to Zarathushtra. The divinity successively assumes the form of the wind, a bull, a horse, a camel, a boar, a youth, a raven, a ram, a he-goat, and finally of a man.[164] He escorts Mithra in the shape of a boar to smite those that have lied unto the guardian of truth.[165]

Raman

He causes the joy of life. Another instance of a hymn consecrated in name to one Yazata, but wholly devoted to the praise and glorification of another, is furnished by the Ram Yasht (15). Vayu, the genius of wind, is the co-labourer of Raman, and the Yasht treats of his achievements. Raman Khvastra is the genius of the joy of life. The joy that he imparts is not the joy of the spirit, and does not convey any spiritual significance. It is the joy or pleasure pertaining to this life. Good abode and good pastures that bring comfort and happiness in the present life are Raman's gifts. Savouriness of food is from him. Rich harvest, fertile fields, wide pasture, abundant fodder, and thick foliage, are the boons of Raman and his associate divinities, like Mithra and Vayu.[166] In fact it is Mithra and Tishtrya who impart this joy to the abodes of the Aryan nations.[167] The waters of Ardvi Sura Anahita are likewise invoked to grant joyful dwellings for the worshippers of Mazda.[168]

Rata

Charity personified. This female genius of charity, grace, or almsgiving is the close companion of Spenta Armaiti with whom she is conjointly invoked in the hymns of praise.[169] Through her Ahura Mazda gives reward,[170] for he has spoken of her with express sanction to Zarathushtra, and in obedience the prophet has introduced her to humanity.[171] The faithful fervently pray

[164] Yt. 14. 2, 7, 9, 11, 15, 17, 19, 23, 25, 27.
[165] Yt. 10. 70.
[166] Ys. 1. 3; 2. 3; 22. 23; 25. 4; Vsp. 1. 7; 2. 9; Yt. 10. 146; Yt. 15; Sr. 1. 21; 2. 21; Vd. 3. 1; G. 1. 7.
[167] Yt. 8. 2; 10. 4.
[168] Ys. 68. 14.
[169] Sr. 1. 5; 2. 5.
[170] Ys. 40. 1.
[171] Ys. 65. 9.

that the spirit of charity of the religious devotee[172] may drive away the demon of stinginess from the house. It is plainly to be seen throughout that the prophet feels acutely the great hardship of man's fierce struggle to keep up life. The poor live a life of constant struggle with poverty and distress; the rich have to succour them as a duty. If one of the faith approaches another seeking goods, or a wife, or knowledge, the man of means should help him with goods, he should arrange for the marriage of this poor co-religionist, he should pay for his instruction in religious matters.[173] It is in every man's power to practise charity, either in thoughts, or in words, or in deeds.

Akhshti

The angel of peace. This female divinity is peace personified, but even though perfectly clearly recognizable as such, she is very obscurely outlined as to traits. She is invoked in company with Vohu Manah, or Good Mind,[174] for nothing can break the inner peace in which the spirit of a man of good thoughts reposes. Akhshti is usually called victorious.[175]

The term *ākhshti* occurs also as a common noun. This peace as well as war lies in the power of Mithra to bring upon the country.[176] The rulers invoke Chisti to procure peace for their countries,[177] and the faithful pray that peace and concord may drive out discord and strife from their abodes.[178]

Manthra Spenta

The spirit of the spells. The Gathas spoke of the *mānthra*, the sacred formula, or inspired utterance of great spiritual potency, but did not personify it. The Avestan texts do so, however, under the name Manthra Spenta, or Holy Formula. The *mānthras* generally indicate the spells of magical charms in the Younger Avesta. Manthra Spenta, the embodiment of the holy spell, is invoked along with Daena, the genius of religion and Vohu Manah's wisdom.[179] As an angel presiding over the formulas of the faith he wards off evil, exorcises those possessed

[172] Ys. 60. 5.
[173] Vd. 4. 44.
[174] Yt. 2. 1; Sr. 1. 2; 2. 2.
[175] Vsp. 7. 1; Yt. 2. 1, 6; 11. 15; 15. 1; Sr. 1. 2; 2. 2.
[176] Yt. 10. 29.
[177] Yt. 16. 19.
[178] Ys. 60. 5.
[179] Sr. 1. 29; 2. 29.

of the demons, and heals the sick; he is consequently invoked to heal the ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine diseases created by Angra Mainyu.[180] He is efficacious and the most glorious one;[181] and, like every other angel, Manthra Spenta has his Fravashi.[182]

The potency of the spells. The collocation *mānthra spenta* occurs more frequently in its ordinary meaning than as the name of the angel presiding over the holy spells. The term *mānthra* without its appellative *spenta* is also freely used to designate the spell. There are many such spells of various degrees of efficacy. Their conjuring efficacy is very great. They are supposed to have inherent mysterious power of their own, and the mere recital of these magical charms produces marvellous effects. The mystical compositions, as such, are credited with some kind of spiritual efficacy, some superhuman power; and through the recitation of them man can avert the baneful influence of the demons. The holy spell is the very soul of Ahura Mazda.[183] Whoso pronounces the names of Ahura Mazda by day and by night, on leaving his bed, or while retiring for sleep, or upon leaving his home or his town, is able to withstand the attacks of the demons, and will receive as much succour and help as a thousand men could jointly give to one man.[184]

The chief spells. Some of the most excellent, the most mighty, the most efficacious, the most smiting, the most victorious, the most healing, the greatest, and the best of the spells are the Ahuna Vairya formula, the Airyaman Ishya prayer, the names of Ahura Mazda and of the Amesha Spentas.[185] Saoshyant and his companions will recite the Airyaman Ishya prayer at the time of renovation of the world. Through its intonation Angra Mainyu and his evil crew shall be hidden in the earth, the dead shall rise up, and Ahura Mazda shall rule according to his divine will.[186] There are other sacred formulas of great importance, such as the Ashem Vohu and Yenghe Hatam. These are

[180] Vd. 22. 6.
[181] Ys. 1. 13; 2. 13; 25. 6; Vsp. 21. 2.
[182] Yt. 13. 86.
[183] Yt. 13. 81; Vd. 19. 14.
[184] Yt. 1. 16-19.
[185] Yt. 1. 1-3; 3. 5, 6; 11. 3; WFr. 4. 1.
[186] WFr. 4. See Haas, *An Avestan Fragment on the Resurrection*, with translation and notes in *Spiegel Memorial Volume*, pp. 181-187, Bombay, 1908.

composed in the Gathic dialect and are of rare merit. They are next in importance only to the most sacred formula of all, the Ahuna Vairya, which is spoken of in the following paragraph.

Ahuna Vairya. The greatest of all the spells, the Word par excellence of the Zarathushtrian theology, which is constantly on the tongue of the faithful, is the Ahuna Vairya. It is made up of twenty-one words, every one of which corresponds to one of the twenty-one Nasks which make up the complete Holy Writ of the Zoroastrians. It is the quintessence of the entire scriptures. In reply to the prophet's inquiry about the origin of this sacred formula, Ahura Mazda says that before the heavens, before the waters, before the earth, before the animals, before the trees, before the fire, before men, before the archangels, before the demons, and before the entire material existence, Ahuna Vairya was.[187] Ahura Mazda pronounced it when the world was not.[188] One correct recitation of it without any omission is worth the chanting of a hundred Gathas,[189] and will enable the devout to reach paradise.[190] Of all the sacred formulas that have ever been pronounced or are now recited, or which will be recited hereafter, this word that the Lord God has announced to the holy prophet is the best.[191] It gives courage and victory to the soul and conscience of man.[192] Humanity would redeem itself from death by embracing it in the fulness of faith.[193]

Zarathushtra chants aloud this Word when the demon Buiti seeks his death, and he puts the fiend to flight by the mere recital of it.[194] With the same word does the prophet repel the Evil Spirit himself, when he comes to tempt him.[195]

The value of the recitation and the intonation of the formula is greatly impaired when it is inattentively chanted with errors and omissions.[196] Ahura Mazda prevents the careless soul that makes such mistakes from entering paradise.[197]

The number of times that the spells are recited. The tenth Fargard, or chapter, of the Vendidad gives a list of the Gathic stanzas which are to be repeated twice, three times, and four times at the beginning of the spells to repel evil. The

[187] Ys. 19. 1-4.
[188] Ys. 19. 8.
[189] Ys. 19. 5.
[190] Ys. 19. 6.
[191] Ys. 19. 10.
[192] Yt. 21. 4.
[193] Ys. 19. 10.
[194] Vd. 19. 2.
[195] Vd. 19. 9.
[196] Ys. 19. 5.
[197] Ys. 19. 7.

Airyaman Ishya prayer is generally repeated four times. The most frequently occurring formulas that are repeated in various numbers, as the occasion demands, are the Ashem Vohu and the Ahuna Vairya. They are generally used at the opening or at the close of all prayers. The number of times which they are recited varies from one to a hundred thousand, or, to be precise, the following specific numbers are found among the references to the different prayers: one, two, three, four, five, seven, eight, ten, twelve, twenty-one, one hundred, two hundred, twelve hundred, and a hundred thousand.

Those privileged to recite the spells. The Manthrans, or chanters, are those who are privileged to recite the spells.[198] The knowledge of the secret formulas is to be zealously guarded, it is to be imparted only to the veriest few in the closest circle.[199] The potency of such spells greatly lies in their careful and accurate recitation, without omitting any part of the prescribed formulas, or without violating the rigid rules of the manner of chanting. This requires that the reciter should be well versed in the art of exorcising, of healing, or in any other function he undertakes to perform with the help of the sacred spells. Teaching a manthra to an infidel is equivalent to giving a tongue to the wolf.[200]

Dahma Afriti

She personifies the power of benediction. Each time that a righteous person offers sacrifices unto this personification of a divine blessing, she comes to him in the shape of a camel.[201]

Damoish Upamana

He personifies the power of anathema. This embodiment of the power to utter an awful malediction upon an offender against righteousness is generally mentioned alongside of Mithra.[202] When Mithra goes forth on his crusade against the demons and their followers throughout the seven zones, this angel, with the dread power of uttering fatal imprecations, accompanies him in the shape of a ferocious boar.[203] Furthermore, when Ahura Mazda, the supreme heavenly judge, comes down to attend the ordeal court, Damoish Upamana is one of

[198] Ys. 7. 24; 41. 5. [199] Yt. 4. 10; 14. 46. [200] TdFr. 3; Nr. 17. [201] TdFr. 64, 65. [202] Yt. 10. 9, 66, 68, 127. [203] Yt. 10. 127.

those to join among the number of his co-adjutors.[204] He is also seen moving in the company of the Fravashis when they go out to the battlefield to help their favoured army.[205] The sacrificing priest invites him to attend the Yasna-sacrifice.[206]

Airyaman

The genius of health. This Indo-Iranian divinity originally conveys the idea of comradeship and occurs mostly in the Vedas and casually in the Avesta in connection with the wedding rites. The fifty-fourth chapter of the Yasna is consecrated to Airyaman. He is invoked to come down to the wedding for the joy of the faithful.[207] In regard to attributes given to Airyaman we may add in this connection that his standing epithet is 'the beloved one.'

But Airyaman plays a more prominent part in the Iranian literature as the genius of health. He is an acolyte to Asha Vahishta, and is invoked together with him.[208] The third Yasht, which bears the name of Asha Vahishta, is, in fact, mostly devoted to Airyaman. Ahura Mazda created this earth immune from any sickness and disease, but the Evil Spirit introduced therein ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine diseases.[209] Ahura Mazda accordingly sends his messenger Nairyosangha to Airyaman with the request to go to the world with his healing remedies. Airyaman quickly obeys the divine command and begins his work.[210] He smites and drives away all kinds of sickness and death, magic and sorcery.[211] Airyaman does not heal by means of herbs and drugs, medicine and surgery, but by the holy spells. In fact one of the greatest of such sacred formulas, the Airyaman Ishya, as we have already seen, bears his name and is used to smite all manner of disease and death.[212]

Haoma

The divinity of joint Indo-Iranian fame. One of the most distinctive features common to the Indo-Iranian peoples before their separation is the Haoma-Soma cult. The Avestan Haoma

[204] Yt. 12. 4.
[205] Yt. 13. 47.
[206] Ys. 1. 15; 2. 15.
[207] Ys. 54. 1.
[208] Sr. 1. 3; 2. 3.
[209] Vd. 22. 2, 9, 15.
[210] Vd. 22. 7-20.
[211] Vd. 22. 21-24.
[212] Vd. 20. 12.

is identical with Vedic Soma, and both refer to the sacred drink prepared from a special plant and partaken of as a part of the ritual service. Haoma has secured a prominent place in the Later Avestan theology and forms an essential part of the Zoroastrian liturgy. Haoma primarily is a plant of this world, from which the drink was quaffed as a religious act, but the idea soon evolves into an angel of the same name presiding over this plant. The two concepts are so closely interwoven that it often becomes difficult to ascertain whether the Haoma occurring in a certain passage is the genius of the plant of that name, or the plant itself. Three chapters of the Yasna and a Yasht mostly composed of excerpts from the Yasna are dedicated to Haoma.

Ahura Mazda brought for Haoma the star-bespangled spiritual girdle, that is, the Mazdayasnian religion. Girt with this he dwells on the top of the mountains,[213] and from these heights he sacrifices unto Drvaspa, Sraosha, Mithra, and Ashi Vanghuhi.[214]

Haoma pleads the greatness of his cult. He is anxious that his cult, which has been in vogue for centuries, be given a due place in the new faith and receive the sanction of the prophet. The poet depicts him as approaching Zarathushtra for this particular purpose. One morning, we are informed, Haoma came to the prophet as he was chanting the sacred Gathas before the fire-altar, and asked him to seek his favour by consecrating the Haoma juice for libations and to praise him as the other sages had praised him.[215] In reply to Zarathushtra's inquiry Haoma proceeds to give instances of some of the greatest of his celebrants. The first among the mortals to sacrifice unto the angel Haoma by pounding the Haoma plant for libation was Vivanhvant, and the great benefit he derived therefrom was that the glorious Yima was born unto him.[216] Athwya, Thrita, and Pourushaspa, the father of the prophet himself, were among the other prominent men who sacrificed unto Haoma. Their reward was that illustrious sons were born unto them. Thus Zarathushtra himself was born unto Pourushaspa because the latter praised Haoma.[217] Zarathushtra, the poet says, thereupon paid homage to the angel, and proclaimed his cult as the most praiseworthy.[218]

Haoma's titles. The standing epithet of Haoma is 'far from

[213] Ys. 9. 26.
[214] Ys. 57. 19; Yt. 9. 17, 18; 10. 88; 17. 37, 38.
[215] Ys. 9. 1, 2.
[216] Ys. 9. 3, 4.
[217] Ys. 9. 6-13.
[218] Ys. 9. 16.

death.' He is the powerful one, and rules according to his will.[219] He is the lord of knowledge and possesses good wisdom.[220] He is the healing one, beautiful, lordly, and of golden eyes.[221]

His gifts. Zarathushtra invokes Haoma and asks from him intelligence, courage, victory, health, increase, prosperity, vigour of body, and power to rule at will, and to smite the wicked that he may vanquish the evil done by the wicked men and demons.[222] The prophet further prays to him for health of the body, long duration of life, the all-shining abode of the righteous, the realization of his wishes on earth, a complete triumph over the wicked, and a foreknowledge of the evil intents of the wicked.[223] Haoma bestows these boons upon him. Haoma in like manner gives knowledge to the aspiring students, husbands to the ripening maidens, beautiful offspring and righteous progeny to women, and paradise to the righteous.[224] The devout worshipper, in return, dedicates his very body to him.[225] Piety, accompanied by joy, enters the house in which Haoma dwells.[226]

Haoma implored to rout the wicked. This angel is invoked to guard the faithful from the harm of the wicked, to take away the power of their hands and feet, and to confuse their minds, so that they cannot behold the universe with both their eyes.[227] He is besought to hurl his weapons at the skulls of the wicked for the protection of the righteous,[228] and to crush the thought of the maligner.[229]

Haoma's due. Haoma is to be propitiated with sacrifice. Among other objects animals were sacrificed in the Zoroastrian ritual unto the angels, and the different parts of the consecrated flesh were allotted to the various Yazatas. The Pahlavi books elaborately treat the question of reserving particular parts of the animal for the various Yazatas. We are told that Ahura Mazda has set apart for Haoma as his share in the sacrifice the jawbone, the tongue, and the left eye of the immolated animal.[230] In general this is also in accordance with the statement of Herodotus[231] regarding the Persian acts of sacrifice in worship.

Haoma's curse. Whosoever deprives Haoma of his portion

[219] Ys. 9. 25.
[220] Ys. 9. 27; 10. 2.
[221] Yt. 9. 17; 10. 88; 17. 37.
[222] Ys. 9. 17, 18.
[223] Ys. 9. 19-21.
[224] Ys. 9. 22, 23; 11. 10.
[225] Ys. 10. 14; 11. 10.
[226] Ys. 10. 1.
[227] Ys. 9. 28, 29.
[228] Ys. 9. 30-32.
[229] Ys. 10. 12.
[230] Ys. 11. 4.
[231] Herod. 1. 132.

in the sacrifice, displeases him, and the penalty he pays for this slight to Haoma is that a priest, a warrior, or a husbandman is not thereafter born in his house. The faithful is exhorted to propitiate him with his due portion, lest the offended angel should bind him with heavy iron chains as he bound Franrasyan.[232] Haoma pronounces his curse of being childless and of evil name and fame against those who, like thieves, rob him of his legitimate portion in the sacrifice.[233] He hurled down the arrogant Keresani from his throne.[234]

Haoma, king of plants. Haoma is the sovereign lord of all plants. Physically it is the plant that grows on the highest summits of Mount Hara Berezaiti, the modern Alburz.[235] The birds carried it from there in all directions.[236] The nourishing earth is its mother where it grows in vales and dales, spreading sweet perfume all around.[237] It is of golden hue, and the celestial drink prepared from its branches is most invigorating and profitable for the soul of man.[238] Indulgence in intoxicating beverages causes wrath and strife, quarrel and confusion, but the drink of Haoma is accompanied by righteousness and piety.[239] It confers immortality. It is the source of righteousness.[240] Haoma grows in abundance when it is praised by man. The pounding of the Haoma juice for sacrifice is tantamount to the destruction of the demons by thousands.[241] Misery vanishes and happiness and health enter the house in which Haoma is prepared.[242] The exhilarating drink gives inspiration and enlightenment to his supplicant and makes the beggar's mind as exalted as that of the rich.[243] The faithful pray that the healing remedies of Haoma may reach them for the strength of their bodies.[244]

Ashi Vanghuhi

Physically she stands for plenty, morally for piety. On the physical side Ashi Vanghuhi, or Good Sanctity, is the guardian of earthly riches. She fills the barns of men with grain and with cattle, their coffers with gold, the fields with foliage, the chests of virtuous women with ornaments and

[232] Ys. 11. 5-7.
[233] Ys. 11. 3.
[234] Ys. 9. 24.
[235] Ys. 10. 10.
[236] Ys. 10. 11.
[237] Ys. 10. 4, 17.
[238] Ys. 9. 16.
[239] Ys. 10. 8; Yt. 17. 5.
[240] Ys. 10. 4.
[241] Ys. 10. 6.
[242] Ys. 10. 7.
[243] Ys. 10. 13.
[244] Ys. 10. 14.

their boxes with fine garments.[245] On the ethical side she personifies sanctity and thus represents spiritual riches. She is also the giver of the mental riches unto men, that is, the bright understanding and the innate wisdom.[246] Ahura Mazda is her father and Spenta Armaiti, the embodiment of holy devotion, is her mother. The archangels, as well as Sraosha, Rashnu, and Mithra, are her brothers, and Daena, the genius of the holy faith of Zarathushtra, is her sister.[247] As the genius of plenty she joins Mithra, who increases pastures and fodder.[248] The seventeenth Yasht is dedicated to her. Parendi, Chisti, Erethe, and Rasanstat are invoked in her company.[249]

Ashi's attributes. She is bright, exalted, well-formed, well worthy of sacrifice, possessed of the bright chariot, courageous, giver of weal and health.[250] She is beautiful, shining with joy, and far reaching through radiance.[251] She, the exalted one, is well-made and of noble origin; she rules at her will and is possessed of glory in her body.[252] She, the courageous one, carries all desirable things in her hands.[253] She is the protector, guardian, helper, healer, smiter of the malice of the demons and of the wicked men, the giver of good gifts, blessings, and success, and the bestower of the greatest, best, and the fairest reward unto men.[254]

Her supplicants. Haoma, among the angels, and Haoshyangha, Yima, Thraetaona, Haosravah, among men prior to the advent of Zarathushtra, as well as the prophet himself and King Vishtaspa, his royal patron and helper in the propagation of the new faith, are among the most illustrious of her supplicants. These worshippers severally offered her sacrifices and asked for various boons from her, which she granted in answer to their prayers.[255] The most favoured among her votaries is Zarathushtra himself; for him her loving regard is great.[256] This is because the prophet himself is the visible embodiment of sanctity on earth and the promoter of righteousness among men.

Her work. She is ever ready to help the faithful. She goes

[245] Yt. 17. 7-14.
[246] Yt. 17. 2.
[247] Yt. 17. 2, 16.
[248] Yt. 10. 66.
[249] Yt. 17. 62; Sr. 1. 25.
[250] Yt. 17. 1; Sr. 2. 25.
[251] Yt. 17. 6.
[252] Yt. 17. 15.
[253] Yt. 17. 7-14.
[254] Ys. 52. 1-3.
[255] Yt. 17. 24-26, 28-31, 33-35, 37-39, 41-43, 45-47, 49-52.
[256] Yt. 17. 17-22.

to those who invoke her from near or afar with pious libations.[257] The house which Ashi graces with her presence becomes full of perfume.[258] Happy indeed is the man whom Ashi attends, for riches, abundance, and prosperity spring up in his house.[259] She gives plenty to the rulers and might to the warriors to smite their enemies.[260] The devout pray for her favour and attendance,[261] and thus implore her not to withhold her kindness from them.[262] That Ashi may not quit their houses, is the fervent prayer of the faithful;[263] and the Fravashis are invoked by the righteous to bring the blessed Ashi into their abodes.[264] She follows the generous man who causes joy unto the righteous poor by his liberal gifts, and she fills his house with a thousandfold flocks and horses.[265]

What offends Ashi most. She is grieved at the sight of maidens who remain unmarried for a long time.[266] She does not accept the libations offered by sterile persons and wicked courtesans.[267] As the zealous guardian of the sanctity of matrimony, she abhors the wife who is untrue to the nuptial tie, the woman who violates the law of chastity, and the adulteress who sells her body for profit or pleasure.[268]

Parendi

Ashi's associate. Parendi, as the female genius of riches, plenty, and activity, is held by some scholars to be identical with the Vedic Puramdhi. She is the constant companion of Ashi Vanghuhi, and is invoked with her.[269] She is active in thought, active in word, and active in deed, and gives activity to man's body.[270] She moves about in a light chariot.[271] As the impersonation of earthly riches Parendi accompanies the celestial car of Mithra, the lord of wide pastures, or again she attends Tishtrya, the genius of rain, in furthering the prosperity of the earth.[272]

[257] Yt. 17. 2.
[258] Yt. 17. 6.
[259] Yt. 17. 7-14.
[260] Yt. 17. 7, 12.
[261] Yt. 17. 7-14.
[262] Yt. 17. 15.
[263] Ys. 60. 7.
[264] Yt. 13. 157.
[265] Yt. 18. 3-5.
[266] Yt. 17. 59.
[267] Yt. 17. 54.
[268] Yt. 17. 57, 58.
[269] Ys. 13. 1; 38. 2; Yt. 8. 38; 10. 66; Sr. 1. 25; 2. 25.
[270] Vsp. 7. 2.
[271] Yt. 8. 38; 24. 9; Sr. 1. 25; 2. 25.
[272] Yt. 8. 38; 10. 66.

Drvaspa

The female genius of cattle. She is a female genius of the animal world. As the guardian of herds, she is invoked in company with Geush Tashan and Geush Urvan.[273] A Yasht (9) is consecrated to her and bears her name, or more familiarly that of Gosh or Geush Urvan. Drvaspa moves about in her own chariot. Mazda has made her heroic and righteous. She is the bestower of health upon the cattle and kine. She watches well from afar, gives welfare and long-continuing friendship. She is nourishing, courageous, well-formed, possessed of weal, giver of health, and powerful helper of the righteous.[274]

Her sacrificers. The Yasht gives a list of her supplicants who have asked her to grant them various boons. They are the same persons that invoke Ashi Vanghuhi and pray for the same boons that they ask from her. The only difference between the forms of invoking Drvaspa and Ashi is that no offering is made to Ashi by any of her supplicants, whereas in the case of Drvaspa we see that with the exception of Haoma and Zarathushtra the other heroes, Haoshyangha, Yima, Thraetaona, Haosravah, and Vishtaspa, bring to her offerings of a hundred horses, a thousand oxen, ten thousand small cattle, and the libations.[275]

Geush Tashan and Geush Urvan

Drvaspa's associates. We have seen above in the Gathas among the impersonations of the animal world or universe two distinct names Geush Tashan, the fashioner of the Cow or of the universe, and Geush Urvan, the soul of the Cow or of the universe. The first of these, Geush Tashan, we understood as personifying the creative genius of Ahura Mazda; in the Later Avestan texts Geush Tashan appears about six times.[276] We do not hear anything more definite regarding him than the fact that he is invoked by name along with other tutelary divinities. It may indeed be emphasized that he is entirely unknown from the time of the Pahlavi period onward. Geush Urvan is invoked

[273] Sr. 1. 14; 2. 14.
[274] Yt. 9. 1, 2, 12, 16, 20, 24.
[275] Yt. 9. 3-5, 8-11, 13-15, 17-19, 21-23, 25-27, 29-32.
[276] Ys. 1. 2; 39. 1; 70. 2; Vsp. 9. 5; Sr. 1. 14; WFr. 6. 1.

in company with Geush Tashan and Drvaspa.[277] Verethraghna, the angel of victory, complains before Zarathushtra that the mischief of the demons and their worshippers increases upon earth because men do not offer sacrifices to Geush Urvan.[278]

Hvarekhshaeta

The sun deified. Hvarekhshaeta is the shining sun as well as the genius presiding over him. The sixth Yasht and the first Nyaish are consecrated to him; but in fact the first two Nyaishes celebrate Hvarekhshaeta and Mithra conjointly. These two litanies, moreover, are always recited together during the daytime. The treatment of the sun-Yazata and the physical sun as a phenomenon of nature is so complicated that it is difficult in many instances to distinguish the one from the other. It is not so much Hvarekhshaeta in the capacity of an angel that figures here, as does Hvarekhshaeta, the sun itself. The writer of the hymn in honour of Hvarekhshaeta is more interested in depicting the movements of the sun itself as the orb of day than in giving any account of the Yazata, or presiding genius of the sun. We have a vivid picture of the sun's movements, its rising and setting, its power to rout the fiends of uncleanness and impurity, but we have hardly anything which treats of the spiritual personality behind this great luminary of nature. The worship of the brilliant sun must have preceded the period of its deification, and the poet cannot quite rid himself of the fascination of the primitive form of nature-worship. The physical phenomenon of the sun is always present before the mind of the writer; and there is very little attempt to address the presiding genius through his visible image, the concrete representative being the direct object of praise and glorification. Curtius refers to the homage paid to the sun.[279]

Hvarekhshaeta is invoked by his name, and his standing epithets are 'the imperishable, radiant, and the swift-horsed.' The demons who, in the darkness of night, come out by the million from the bowels of the earth, glide away as soon as the sun mounts the sky and the world is ablaze with its light. Though they feast in the night-time, as darkness is congenial

[277] Ys. 1. 2; 39. 1; 70. 2; Vsp. 9. 5; Sr. 1. 14; 2. 14.
[278] Yt. 14. 54.
[279] Hist. Alex. 3. 7.

to their nature, they fast during the day, for light is destructive to their being. When the light of Hvarekhshaeta breaks through the darkness of night, it drives away, not only darkness, but defilement, disease, and death. Ahura Mazda has the sun for his eye.[280] The heavens bathed in the light of the sun form his garments.[281]

Leprosy is especially regarded as a consequence of sinning against the sun, and Herodotus tells us that persons affected with the disease were not permitted to enter a town.[282]

Maonghah

The moon personified. Herodotus writes that the moon is the tutelary divinity of Persia.[283] The case of this nature divinity is analogous to that of the sun. Maonghah is at one and the same time the moon and the personification of the moon. The seventh Yasht and the third Nyaish are dedicated to this divine personage. Here also we find throughout the description of the waxing and the waning of the moon the periods of the new and the full moons, and the benefit that the light of the moon imparts to the world. We hear much of the concrete moon, but very little of the abstract person of the angel. The sole-created Bull, the progenitor of the animal world, is invoked along with the moon.[284]

The moon is constantly spoken of as the possessor of the seed of the Bull.[285] The moon is furthermore described as the bestower, radiant, glorious, possessed of water, possessed of warmth, possessed of knowledge, wealth, riches, discernment, weal, verdure, good, and the healing one.[286]

Anaghra Raochah

Deification of the endless light. Anaghra Raochah means the Endless Light. It is the celestial light as opposed to the

[280] Ys. 1. 11.
[281] Yt. 13. 3.
[282] Herod. 1. 138.
[283] Herod. 7. 37.
[284] Sr. 1. 12; 2. 12.
[285] On which subject, and on a wide-spread belief in a bull in the moon, see Gray, in *Spiegel Memorial Volume*, pp. 160-168, Bombay, 1908.
[286] Yt. 7. 5; Ny. 3. 7.

earthly light.[287] In the order of naming the various kinds of heavenly lights, Anaghra Raochah comes after the stars, moon, and the sun.[288] Like the stars, the moon, and the sun, this supreme light stood without motion until the Fravashis or the Guardian Spirits showed it its path of movement.[289]

Anaghra Raochah is personified as a Yazata, being invoked at the sacrifice,[290] and the thirtieth day of the Zoroastrian calendar bears his name. In a couple of instances we find Paradise and the Bridge of Judgment, likewise Apam Napat, Haoma, Dahma Afriti, and Damoish Upamana, invoked along with Anaghra Raochah.[291]

Asman

Firmament deified. In its original meaning Asman means the sky; it is later personified as the genius of the sky, and invoked as a Yazata.[292] Asman and Vahishta Ahu, or Paradise, are invoked together,[293] and the twenty-seventh day of the Zoroastrian month is called after the name of Asman.

Ushah

The female divinity of dawn. Ushah is identical with the Vedic Ushas, and is the female divinity of the dawn in both religions, thus coming down from the common Indo-Iranian period. It is she who announces, as the first glimpse of light, to creation, the approach of dawn. Ushah's personality is very faintly pronounced in the Younger Avestan texts, yet she is described as beautiful, resplendent, possessed of bright steeds, blessed, and heroic; and her light illumines all the seven zones.[294] Auxiliaries to Ushah are Ushahina and Berejya and Nmanya. In fact Ushahina, who is also a male personification of dawn, is the name of the fifth period of the day, and the prayer consecrated to Ushah bears his name. The priest at the

[287] Vd. 2. 40.
[288] Ys. 71. 9; Yt. 12. 35; 13. 57; G. 3. 6.
[289] Yt. 13. 57.
[290] Ys. 1. 16; 16. 6; 71. 9; Sr. 1. 30; 2. 30; Vd. 19. 35.
[291] Sr. 1. 30; 2. 30.
[292] Ys. 1. 16; 16. 6; Sr. 1. 27; 2. 27.
[293] Sr. 1. 27; 2. 27.
[294] Yt. 5. 62; Vd. 18. 15, 23; G. 5. 5.

sacrifice undertakes to propitiate Ushahina by sacrifice, if he has in thought, word, deed, or will offended him.[295]

Tishtrya

The star genius directs the rain. Next in importance to the sun and moon, among the heavenly luminaries, are the countless stars. Among the stars that are personified as objects of praise and reverence, the most prominent is the radiant and glorious star Tishtrya. He is the star Sirius in the constellation of Canis Major. The Yazata who impersonates this brilliant star bears naturally also the same name. The Tishtrya Yasht (8) sings the glory of the twofold work of Tishtrya, both as star and as the Yazata that presides over it. Tishtrya is, therefore, the rain-star, and the Yasht gives a lively picture of his movements in producing clouds and rain and sleet, and distributing them over all the world. Tishtrya's constant companions are the star-Yazatas, named Vanant, Satavaesa, and Haptoiringa, as guardian spirits of different regions of the heavens.[296]

Tishtrya's attributes. His standing epithets are 'the radiant' and 'the glorious.' He is the giver of fertility to the fields,[297] the giver of happy and good abode unto men, the white, shining, seen from afar, the healing, and the exalted one.[298] He is possessed of the seed of the waters, the valiant, the courageous, far reaching, the efficient,[299] and of sound eyes.[300] Ahura Mazda has appointed Tishtrya as the lord of all other stars, even as he has ordained Zarathushtra as the spiritual lord of all mankind.[301] The creator has made him as worthy of sacrifice, as worthy of invocation, as worthy of propitiation, and as worthy of glorification as himself.[302] According to Plutarch he is established as a scout over all other stars.[303]

The sacrificial offerings enable Tishtrya to work with added vigour and strength. Tishtrya smites the wicked fairies.[304] Like Verethraghna, he takes upon himself successive forms when he goes out for active work. He moves forward

[295] Ys. 1. 20, 21.
[296] Sr. 1. 13; 2. 13; cf. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism*, p. 23, London, 1913.
[297] Yt. 8. 1.
[298] Yt. 8. 2.
[299] Yt. 8. 4.
[300] Yt. 8. 12; Ny. 1. 8.
[301] Yt. 8. 44.
[302] Yt. 8. 50, 52.
[303] Is. et Os. 47.
[304] Yt. 8. 8, 39, 40, 51-55.

in the heavens for the first ten nights of the month in the form of a young man, for the next ten nights in the form of a bull, and then, for the last ten nights in the shape of a beautiful horse.[305] In accordance with the will of Ahura Mazda and the archangels, he traverses the most distant parts of the earth,[306] and the Iranian countries long for his advent, for it is through him that the country will witness a year of plenty or of drought.[307] Men and beasts, the waters and all, look eagerly to the rising of the star Tishtrya, as he will send a flood of rain to fertilize their waste lands with water and bestow riches upon the earth, if the righteous faithfully offer him praise and worship.[308] The farmer yearns for a few drops of Tishtrya's rain to moisten his parched fields, the gardener longs for a shower to brighten the foliage. The land smiles with rich harvests as a result of his fertilizing waters.

Tishtrya complains before Ahura Mazda about the indifference of men who do not sacrifice unto him. When invoked with sacrifice, as are the other angels, he is willing to hasten to the help of the righteous, whether for a single night, or two nights, or fifty nights, or even a hundred nights.[309] Tishtrya affirms that owing to his power to further righteousness, he is worthy of sacrifice and invocation, and if people will offer him libations and Haoma in sacrifice, he will grant them heroic children, and purity unto their souls, the riches of oxen and horses.[310] He pours down water in abundance upon the earth, and brings prosperity unto the whole creation, when he receives the offering of a sacrifice and is propitiated, rejoiced, and satisfied.[311] Never, in that event, would the hostile horde invade the Aryan countries, nor would any calamity or evil of any kind befall them.[312] Yet in spite of all this, the bounteous kindness of Tishtrya grants boons to his votary whether he prays for them or not.[313]

His fight with the demon of drought. Tishtrya is opposed in his work of producing rain by his adversary Apaosha, the demon of drought, who keeps back the rain. The Tishtrya Yasht gives a picturesque account of the struggle between them.

[305] Yt. 8. 13, 16, 18; Vd. 19. 37.
[306] Yt. 8. 35.
[307] Yt. 8. 36.
[308] Yt. 8. 36, 41, 42, 48.
[309] Yt. 8. 11.
[310] Yt. 8. 15, 17, 19.
[311] Yt. 8. 43, 47.
[312] Yt. 8. 56.
[313] Yt. 8. 49.

In his combat with the fiend that holds the world in clutch through famine and drought, Apaosha assaults his opponent and in their opening combat succeeds in forcing Tishtrya to retreat. Worsted by the fiend, Tishtrya mourns his defeat and complains that men do not sufficiently sacrifice unto him as they do unto other celestial powers, for had they not been sparing in their invocation, he would have been able to bring a further strength of ten horses, of ten camels, of ten oxen, of ten mountains, and of ten rivers to his side. Ahura Mazda himself, thereupon, offers a sacrifice unto Tishtrya and thus imparts new strength to him. Thus emboldened, he now, with renewed vigour, attacks his rival for the second time, and after a fierce struggle overcomes him. His triumph is hailed as the triumph of the waters, plants, and the religion of Mazda, for Tishtrya is now in a position to bring prosperity to the country.[314] Ahura Mazda, the Amesha Spentas, as well as Mithra, Ashi Vanghuhi, and Parendi, are among those that help Tishtrya in this war of the elements for the benefit of mankind.[315]

Vanant

A star-Yazata. The other important star-Yazata besides Tishtrya who is classed among the spiritual beings is Vanant. The twentieth Yasht is composed in his honour. Tradition assigns to him the special work of guarding the gates of the great Alburz round which the sun, moon, and the stars revolve, and accounts him as the leader of a constellation in the western heavens in the war against the planets. In the Avestan Yasht bearing this star-Yazata's name, Vanant is specially invoked to give help to smite the noxious creatures of Angra Mainyu.[316] Some spells to this effect, composed in the Pazand language, are later appended to this particular Yasht. It is elsewhere stated in the Avesta that Ahura Mazda has created him,[317] and that the faithful ask him for strength and victory to enable them to remove distress and tyranny.[318]

Satavaesa

An acolyte of Tishtrya. The star Satavaesa is also personified, but his individuality is very faintly pronounced. He has

[314] Yt. 8. 20-29.
[315] Yt. 8. 7, 38.
[316] Yt. 20. 1.
[317] Yt. 8. 12; Ny. 1. 8.
[318] Yt. 8. 12.

no Yasht or hymn composed to glorify him. As an acolyte of Tishtrya, he causes the waters of the sea Vourukasha to flow down to the seven zones for the nourishment of plants and animals, and for the fertility and prosperity of the Aryan nations.[319]

Haptoiringa

Another acolyte of Tishtrya. This constellation, Ursa Major, is also raised to the position of a lesser divinity. Ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine Fravashis watch over this stellar cluster.[320] The genius of this star is invoked to enable mankind to oppose the evil caused by the sorcerers and fairies.[321]

Vayu

The deification of the wind. Vayu, or Vata, is the Indo-Iranian impersonation of wind. Vayu again at times stands for wind as such, and not for the angel of wind; and the terms Vayu and Vata are variously used to represent either the wind or the genius of wind. As we have already seen, the whole of the Ram Yasht treats of the exploits of Raman's comrade Vayu. Vayu's wind is divided into two parts, the good and the evil. The wind is productive of good, but it also causes harm. That part of Vayu which is supposed to be the source of harm is branded as evil, and classed among Angra Mainyu's creations. Hence the faithful take care to sacrifice unto that part alone of Vayu which is the creation of Spenta Mainyu.[322]

Vayu's attributes. The genius of wind is most frequently called 'working on high.' He strikes terror among all, and fearlessly enters the deepest and the darkest places to smite the demons.[323] He is high-girt, of strong stature, of high foot, of wide breast, of broad thighs, and of powerful eyes.[324] He wears a golden helm and a golden crown, a golden necklace, and golden garments; he has golden shoes and a golden girdle; and armed with golden weapons he rides in a golden chariot rolling on

[319] Yt. 8. 9; 13. 43; Sr. 1. 13; 2. 13.
[320] Yt. 13. 60.
[321] Yt. 8. 12; Sr. 2. 13.
[322] Ys. 22. 24; 25. 5; Yt. 15. 5, 42, 57; Sr. 1. 21; 2. 21.
[323] Yt. 15. 53.
[324] Yt. 15. 54.

golden wheels.[325] A fine image this, to immortalize Vayu in a golden statue! The poet gives a long list of the names of Vayu, and is very prolific in ascribing high attributes to him. In this the ancient composer follows the Yasht dedicated to Ahura Mazda. In fact Vayu is the only angel who is known, like Ahura Mazda, by many names. The text enumerates about forty-seven of such titles. Almost all of these attributes of Vayu are derived from the function of Vayu as wind, rather than from his activity as the genius of wind. They pertain to the atmospheric phenomenon more than to the abstract ideas about the angel. Some of the more important of the names of Vayu are as follows: the overtaker, the all-vanquishing, the good-doer, the one going forwards and backwards, the destroyer, smiter, usurper, the most valiant, the strongest, the firmest, the stoutest, the vanquisher at one stroke, the destroyer of malice, the liberator, the pervading one, and the glorious.[326]

Those who offer sacrifices unto Vayu. The recital of his names has a great efficacy, and Vayu asks Zarathushtra to invoke these names in the thick of the battle, or when the tyrant and heretic threaten him with their havocking hordes. The man in heavy fetters finds himself freed upon the recital of these names.[327] Vayu is the greatest of the great and the strongest of the strong. The text briefly describes how some of the most illustrious personages invoked Vayu and begged of him various boons, and in this connection we may recall that Herodotus [328] mentions the fact that the Persians sacrificed to the winds among other divine forces in nature. The list of Vayu's supplicants in Yasht 15 is headed by Ahura Mazda himself, who desired the boon that he may smite the creatures of Angra Mainyu, but that none may smite the creation of Spenta Mainyu.[329] Among the kings, renowned heroes, and other personages who sacrificed unto Vayu, and to whom the angel granted their boons, are Haoshyangha, Takhma Urupi, Yima, Thraetaona, Keresaspa, Aurvasara, Hutaosa, and such maidens as are not yet given in marriage.[330] Even the wicked Azhi Dahaka begged also of him a boon, but Vayu rejected his sacrifice.[331] Men sacrifice unto Vayu with libations and prayers and ask for strength to vanquish

[325] Yt. 15. 57.
[326] Yt. 15. 43-48.
[327] Yt. 15. 49-52.
[328] Herod. 1. 131.
[329] Yt. 15. 2-4.
[330] Yt. 15. 7-17. 23-41.
[331] Yt. 15. 19-21.

their adversaries.[332] Vayu asks Zarathushtra to invoke him, in order that neither Angra Mainyu, nor the sorcerers, nor the demons may be able to injure the prophet.[333]

Atar

The fire cult in Iran. Atar, or Fire, is most frequently called the son of Ahura Mazda in the Younger Avestan texts. The devout hunger in heart to reach Mazda through him as a mediary.[334] As the most holy symbol of his faith, the house-lord prays that the sacred element may ever burn in his house.[335] We have already seen that the Avesta speaks of some sacred fires consecrated by the pre-Zoroastrian kings in Iran. The Avestan works refer to the *dāitya gātu,* 'proper place' for the fire, and the Old Persian Inscriptions speak of the *āyadanā,* as the places of worship.[336] Herodotus, the earliest of the Greek writers on Persia, however, informs us that the Persians did not erect temples in his days, but sacrificed unto the elements sun, moon, earth, fire, water, and wind on the summits of mountains.[337] Dino, the contemporary of Alexander, does not mention the fire-temples and says that the Persians worshipped in the open air.[338] It may be that these early writers did not come across temples in Iran, in the Greek sense of the term, but there must certainly have been some kind of structures to protect the sacred fire from being extinguished. Strabo[339] for the first time mentions in Cappadocia places dedicated to fire, and speaks of enclosures with fire altars in the centre. No sacrifices, we are told, were offered to any divinity without the accompaniment of the invocation of fire. These altars, we are further informed by Strabo, were filled with ashes over which the sacred fire burned day and night. The Magi, he adds, tended the holy flames, and with Baresman twigs in their hands daily performed their devotions for about an hour.[340] Pausanias[341] corroborates this statement

[332] Yt. 15. 1.
[333] Yt. 15. 56.
[334] Ys. 36. 1.
[335] Ys. 62. 3; Ny. 5. 9.
[336] Bh. 1. 14.
[337] Herod. 1. 131.
[338] Frag. 9. FHG. 2. 91; cf. Windischmann in Sanjana's *Zarathushtra in the Gathas and in the Greek and Roman Classics,* p. 88, Leipzig, 1897.
[339] 60 B.C.
[340] Strabo, p. 733.
[341] 173 A.D.

from his personal observation in Lydia.[342] Xenophon acquaints us with the practice of carrying fire on portable altars in religious processions.[343]

Atar is both the genius of fire and the element fire itself. He is the most bountiful,[344] the lord of the house,[345] of renowned name,[346] the beneficent warrior, and full of glory and healing.[347] Besides being the angel that presides over fire, Atar is also fire as such. The two concepts are often so mixed up together that it becomes difficult to distinguish between the blazing fire burning upon the altar and the angel that personifies it. The difficulty is still more increased when we see the fire in the hearth conceived of as speaking and blessing as a person. The fire of Mazda solicits devotional offerings from those persons for whom he cooks the evening and the morning meal; he looks at the hands of all passersby, to see if they bring some present for him or not, even as a friend for a friend. When the faithful bring to him fuel, dry and exposed to the light, he is propitiated, and in the fulfilment of his wish blesses the votary with abundance and wisdom and joyous life.[348] During the three watches of the night Atar wakes up the master of the house, the husbandman, and calls Sraosha for help.[349] Here also it is not so much the angel Atar that acts, as it is the fire itself, for the master of the house and the husbandman are asked to wash their hands and bring fuel to it, lest the demon Azi should extinguish it.[350] The man who responds with alacrity, and is the first to wake up and tend the fire with dry wood, receives Atar's blessings.[351] The man who sacrifices unto fire with fuel in his hand, with the Baresman in his hand, with milk in his hand, with the mortar for crushing the branches of the sacred Haoma in his hand, is given happiness.[352] Phoenix of Colophon (280 B.C.), cited in Athenaeus, speaks of the fire ritual of the Magi and mentions the Baresman.[352a] Strabo says that the fire-priests fed the sacred fire with dry wood, fat, and oil; and he further adds that some portions of the caul of the sacrificed animal were also placed on it.[353]

[342] Pausanias, 5. 27. 5, 6.
[343] Cyropaedia, 8. 3. 11-13.
[344] Ys. 1. 2.
[345] Ys. 17. 11.
[346] Vsp. 9. 5.
[347] Sr. 1. 9; 2. 9.
[348] Ys. 62. 7-10; Ny. 5. 13-16.
[349] Vd. 18. 18-22.
[350] Vd. 18. 10-21.
[351] Vd. 18. 26, 27.
[352] Ys. 62. 1; Ny. 5. 7.
[352a] Athenaeus, 12, p. 530.
[353] Strabo, p. 732.

Atar's boons. Atar is invoked to grant well-being and sustenance in abundance, knowledge, holiness, a ready tongue, comprehensive, great, and imperishable wisdom, manly valour, watchfulness, a worthy offspring, name and fame in this world, as well as the shining, all-happy paradise of the righteous.[354] Whoso does not treat the fire well displeases Ahura Mazda.[355]

His work. When Mithra goes on his usual round in his golden chariot, Atar drives behind him along with the other divine personifications.[356] When Angra Mainyu breaks into the creation of righteousness, Atar in company with Vohu Manah opposes the malice of the Evil Spirit.[357] When Yima, reft of his senses through the Kingly Glory, revolts from Ahura Mazda, the Glory departs from him and he falls to destruction.[358] It can well be imagined that the monster Azhi Dahaka should strive to capture the departed Glory, but Atar intervenes and vanquishes him.[359]

What causes grief to Atar? Angra Mainyu has created the inexpiable crime of burning or cooking dead matter,[360] and the Vendidad enjoins capital punishment for those who commit it.[361] We are informed that the Persians considered it a mortal sin to defile fire by blowing it with the mouth, or by burning dead matter over it.[362] The Achaemenian monarch Cambyses roused the indignation of his countrymen when he burnt the corpse of King Amasis at Sais.[363] It is, therefore, a crime to bring back fire into a house in which a man has died, within nine nights in winter and a month in summer.[364] Highly meritorious is the deed of bringing to the fire altar the embers of a fire desecrated by dead matter, and great shall be the doer's reward in the next world, when his soul has parted from his body.[365] Elaborate rules

[354] Ys. 68. 4-6; Ny. 5. 10-12.
[355] TdFr. 22, 23.
[356] Yt. 10. 127.
[357] Yt. 13. 77, 78.
[358] Yt. 19. 34-36, 38.
[359] Yt. 19. 46-50.
[360] Vd. 1. 16.
[361] Vd. 8. 73, 74.
[362] Strabo, p. 732; Ctesias, *Persica*, 57; Nicolaos Damascenus, Frag. 68. FHG. 3. 409.
[363] Herodotus, 3. 16.
[364] Vd. 5. 43, 44.
[365] Vd. 8. 81, 82.

are accordingly laid down for the purification of the fire defiled by the dead.[366] There is no purification for the man who carries a corpse to the fire.[367] In the case of every pollution of the pure element, Atar is inexorable.

Nairyosangha

Mazda's celestial herald. Nairyosangha corresponds to the Vedic Narashamsa, generally applied to Agni as his epithet. He is expressly spoken of as a Yazata,[368] and is well-shaped.[369] He is the messenger of Ahura Mazda;[370] when the Evil Spirit introduces disease and death in the world, Ahura Mazda dispatches him as his envoy to Airyaman to come with his healing remedies.[371] He is invoked along with Atar, for he is Atar's associate. He is termed the offspring of sovereignty,[372] and as such he is entitled to go in Mithra's chariot with Sraosha.[373-374] He has his Fravashi.[375]

Ardvi Sura Anahita

The angel of waters. Ardvi Sura is the name of a mythical river as well as that of the female divinity of the waters. She resides in the starry regions.[376] This deity of the heavenly stream gets recognition of the Achaemenian kings, and is included in the extremely short list of the Iranian divinities expressly mentioned in their inscriptions.[377] At a very early date her cult migrates to distant countries. She overleaps the barriers of Mount Alburz and gains her votaries in the far-off land of East and West, where occasionally her cult degenerates into obscene rites. Herodotus, who confuses her with Mithra, says that her cult came to Iran from the Semites of Assyria and Arabia.[378]

She is celebrated in one of the longest Yashts. In this she is described as the most courageous, strong, of noble origin,[379] good, and most beneficent.[380] Ahura Mazda has assigned to her the work of guarding the holy creation, like a shepherd guarding his flock.[381]

[366] Vd. 8. 73-80.
[367] Vd. 7. 25-27.
[368] Ys. 17. 11.
[369] Ys. 57. 3.
[370] Vd. 19. 34.
[371] Vd. 22. 7, 13.
[372] Ys. 17. 11; Ny. 5. 6.
[373-374] Yt. 10. 52.
[375] Yt. 13. 85.
[376] Yt. 5. 85, 88, 132.
[377] Art. Sus. a; Ham.
[378] Herod. 1. 131.
[379] Yt. 5. 15.
[380] Yt. 5. 130, 131.
[381] Yt. 5. 89.

Her image in words found in the texts, corresponds with her statue in stone. The text gives a fine descriptive image of the female deity. She is a maiden of fair body, well-shaped, pure, and glorious. Upon her head she wears a golden crown studded with a hundred stars and beautifully adorned, square golden earrings adorn her ears, a golden necklace decorates her neck, she has tightly girded her waist so that her beautiful breasts come out prominently, her white arms graced by elegant bracelets are stouter than a horse, she wears golden shoes, a rich garment of gold or of the skin of the beavers.[382] This exquisite portrayal of the divinity is regarded by some scholars as the faithful reproduction in words of Anahita's statues in stone and metal. We have already seen on the authority of Berosus that Artaxerxes Mnemon[383] introduced the worship of the images of Anahita among the Persians.[384]

Ahura Mazda heads the list of the sacrificers who entreat her for various boons. The Yasht dedicated to Ardvi Sura Anahita furnishes us with the names of those who have sacrificed unto her and begged of her various boons. The number of her supplicants exceeds that of any other angel. Ahura Mazda and Zarathushtra invoke her, with Haoma and Baresman, with spells and libations, whereas the majority of her other votaries severally offer her a hundred stallions, a thousand oxen, and ten thousand sheep. Haoshyangha, Yima, Thraetaona, Keresaspa, Kavi Usa, Haosravah, Tusa, Vafra Navaza, Jamaspa, Ashavazdah, the son of Pourudakhshti, and Ashavazdah and Thrita, the sons of Sayuzhdri, Vistauru, Yoishta, the members of the Hvova and Naotara families, Vishtaspa, and Zairi-vairi are all granted their diverse boons. These ask for sovereignty over all countries, victory on the battlefield, power to smite the adversaries in battle, to rout the sorcerers and fairies, the fiends and the demons; they pray likewise for bodily health, wisdom to answer the riddles of the heretics, and for riches and swift horses.[385] The boon that Ahura Mazda seeks is that he may win over Zarathushtra to think after his religion, to speak after his religion, and to act after his religion; the prophet in turn begs of her that

[382] Yt. 5, 7, 64, 78, 126-129.
[383] B.C. 404-358.
[384] Frag. 16. FHG. 2. 508; cf. Cumont, *Anahita*, in ERE. vol. 1, pp. 414, 415.
[385] Yt. 5. 21-27, 33-39, 45-55, 61-83, 98, 108-114.

he may gain to his side the mighty king Vishtaspa as a patron to embrace his religion.[386] The rulers and chiefs invoke her, the warriors beg of her swift horses and glory, the priests and their disciples pray for knowledge, the maids beseech her to grant them strong husbands.[387] Ardvi Sura Anahita bestows fruitfulness to women; she purifies the seeds of all males and the wombs of all females for bearing. She, as a divine bestower, gives easy childbirth to all females, and gives them right and timely milk.[388] Ardvi Sura likewise grants boons unto all, because it lies in her power to do so. The sacrificing priest implores her to come down from the stars to the sacrificial altar, and to grant riches, horses, chariots, swords, food, and plenty to men.[389]

She refuses to concede the wicked persons their wishes. Azhi Dahaka wickedly besought her to grant him a boon that he may make all the seven zones empty of men, and the Turanian Franrasyan sought her favour to secure the Glory, and the sons of Vaesaka implored her to grant that they may smite the Aryan nation by tens of thousands and myriads; Arejat-aspa and Vandaremainish craved for the defeat of King Vishtaspa, Zairivairi, and the Aryan nation; but Ardvi Sura Anahita refused to grant the evil wishes to these national foes of Iran.[390]

The offerings of libations. Ardvi Sura Anahita desires that men invoke her with libations and Haoma;[391] these libations are to be drunk by the priest who is well versed in religious lore, and not by any wicked and deformed person.[392] The faithful are to bring libations unto her at any time between the rising and the setting of the sun. Those brought to her after sunset do not reach her; on the contrary, they go to the demons, who revel in these misdirected offerings.[393] We are informed that the man who dedicates these libations before sunrise or after sunset does no better deed than if he should pour them down into the jaws of a venomous snake.[394]

Besides invoking Ardvi Sura Anahita as the Yazata of water, the waters themselves are collectively invoked to grant boons. Zarathushtra is asked to offer a libation to the waters and to

[386] Yt. 5. 17-19, 104-106.
[387] Yt. 5. 85-87.
[388] Ys. 65. 2; Yt. 5. 87; Ny. 4. 3.
[389] Yt. 5. 130-132.
[390] Yt. 5. 29-31, 41-43, 57-59, 116-118.
[391] Yt. 5. 8, 11, 123, 124.
[392] Yt. 5. 91-93.
[393] Yt. 5. 91, 94, 95; Nr. 68.
[394] Nr. 48

ask from them riches, power, and worthy offspring,[395] a happy and a joyful abode in this world and the next, accompanied by riches and glory.[396]

Animal sacrifices to Anahita. Strabo relates the mode of sacrificing to the waters. The sacrificial animal, we are told, is taken to the bank of a river or a lake; a ditch is formed into which the animal is killed. The pieces of meat are then placed on myrtle or laurel, and holding tamarisk twigs in his hands, the priest pours oil mixed with honey and milk on the ground and chants the sacred formulas. Great care is taken that no drop of blood falls into the water while the animal is being immolated; nor must the mixture of oil, honey, and milk be poured into water.[397] This precaution is taken lest the waters be defiled.

Any defilement of the waters evokes Ardvi Sura's displeasure. It is sinful to contaminate the waters. Such an act incurs great displeasure on the part of the genius of waters. Those who wilfully bring dead matter to the waters become unclean for ever and ever.[398] If a man while walking or running, riding or driving, happens to see a corpse floating in a river, he must enter the river and go down into the water ankle-deep, knee-deep, waist-deep, nay even a man's full depth if need be, and take out the decaying body and place it upon the dry ground exposed to the light of the sun.[399] Herodotus informs us that the Persians do not make water, wash or bathe in a river.[400]

Ardvi Sura's chariot. Like some of the Yazatas, Ardvi Sura Anahita has a chariot of her own, in which she drives forth in majesty. She holds the reins in her own hands, and controls four great chargers who are all of white color, of the same stock, and who smite the malice of all tyrants, demons, wicked men, sorcerers, fairies, oppressors, as well as those who are wilfully blind and wilfully deaf.[401] The text enables us to understand the allegorical statement regarding the steeds that are yoked to her chariot, for we are told that the four chargers of Ardvi Sura are the wind, the rain, the cloud, and the sleet; and it was Ahura Mazda who made them for her.[402]

[395] Ys. 65. 11.
[396] Ys. 68. 13, 14, 21.
[397] Strabo, p. 732.
[398] Vd. 7. 25-27.
[399] Vd. 6. 26-29.
[400] Herod. 1. 138.
[401] Yt. 5. 11, 13.
[402] Yt. 5. 120.

Apam Napat

His nature and work. This Indo-Iranian divinity of waters seems very early to have been eclipsed by Anahita, who remains the chief genius presiding over waters in the cult. Apam Napat's Vedic counterpart has an aqueous as well as an igneous nature. In the association of the Avestan Apam Napat with the fire angel Nairyosangha, Spiegel sees traces of this secondary nature.[403] Apam Napat literally means the 'offspring of waters,' and this genius lives beneath the waters.[404] He is the exalted lord and sovereign, the shining one, and the swift-horsed.[405] He is the most prompt to respond when invoked,[406] and co-operates with Vayu and distributes the waters on earth.[407] He furthers the riches of the countries and allays misfortunes;[408] and when the Kingly Glory escapes from the contest of Atar and Azhi Dahaka to the sea Vourukasha it is Apam Napat who takes and protects it.[409] This Yazata is also credited with having made and shaped men.[410]

Ahurani

Another water genius. A female Yazata, though of no great importance, is Ahurani, who impersonates the Ahurian waters.[411] She is invoked in company with the sea Vourukasha and other waters.[412] The faithful devotee prays that if he has offended her in any way, he is ready to expiate his sin by an offering of the libations.[413] She is implored to descend in person and grace the sacrifice with her presence and be propitiated by it.[414] She is likewise invited to come with her gifts of health, prosperity, renown, the enlightenment of thoughts, words, and deeds, and for the well-being of the soul.[415] She is asked to give offspring that will further the prosperity of the house, village, town, and country and add to the renown of the country.[416] Riches and glory, endurance and vigour of body, a long life and the shining,

[403] *Arische Periode*, pp. 192, 193, Leipzig, 1887; see Gray, *Apām Napāt*, in *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, vol. 3, pp. 18-51.
[404] Yt. 19. 52.
[405] Ys. 1. 5; 2. 5; 65. 12; 70. 6; Yt. 5. 72.
[406] Yt. 19. 52.
[407] Yt. 8. 34.
[408] Yt. 13. 95.
[409] Yt. 19. 51.
[410] Yt. 19. 52.
[411] Ys. 38. 3.
[412] Ys. 68. 6.
[413] Ys. 68. 1.
[414] Ys. 68. 9.
[415] Ys. 68. 3, 4.
[416] Ys. 68. 5.

all-happy abode of the righteous are the boons that the devout ask from her.[417] The libations offered her are the most excellent and the fairest, and are filtered by pious men.[418] Good thoughts, good words, and good deeds also serve as her libations.[419] The libations offered to Ahurani cause joy to Ahura Mazda and the Amesha Spentas.[420]

Zam

The earth deified. The Avestan term for earth is *zam,* from which the angel Zam, or Zamyat, derives her name. Her personality is very insipid as compared with Armaiti, who, as we have seen, has the earth under her care and is, in fact, a more active guardian genius of the earth than Zamyat. The twenty-eighth day of every month is sacred to Zamyat. The poet who composed the Yasht in honour of Zamyat does not sing the glory of his heroine, but occupies himself rather with a description of the mountains of the world,[421] and with the celebration of the Divine Glory that descends upon the Aryan race, symbolizing the greatness of the kings and the consecrated piety of the sainted souls.[422]

[417] Ys. 68. 11.
[418] Ny. 1. 18.
[419] Ys. 68. 3.
[420] Ys. 66. 1.
[421] Yt. 19. 1-7.
[422] Yt. 19. 9-93.

CHAPTER XV

FRAVASHIS

What are the Fravashis? A class of higher intelligences playing a most prominent part in the Mazdayasnian pantheon, and receiving sacrifices and adoration from the world of humanity, is that of the Fravashis, or guardian spirits and prototypes of mankind in its purest creation. The Gathas do not mention these beings, but the word *fravashi*, or *fravarti*, if we adopt the spelling which certain Western scholars would uphold, has a corresponding form in the Persian name of the Median king Phraortes,[1] and also of the Median rebel mentioned in the cuneiform inscription of Darius.[2] The longest of the Yashts is dedicated to the Fravashis. The last ten days of the year, including the five intercalary days, are specially set apart for their cult. Besides, the nineteenth day of every month is consecrated to their memory, and the first month of the Iranian calendar receives its name after them.

The Fravashis have been variously compared to the Vedic Pitrs, the Roman Manes, or the Platonic Ideas. True though it is that they share some common traits with these and have striking resemblances to them, yet, after all, they are not wholly the same as these. The manifold nature of their cult offers a complicated and stubborn problem to students of Iranian theology.

Primarily, the Fravashis constitute a world of homonyms of the earthly creations, and they have lived as conscious beings in the empyrean with Ahura Mazda from all eternity. The multifarious objects of this world are so many terrestrial duplicates of these celestial originals. The Fravashis constitute the internal essence of things, as opposed to the contingent and accidental. Earthly creations are so many imperfect copies of these perfect types. The Fravashis are not mere abstractions of thought, but have objective existence and work as spiritual entities in heaven,

[1] B.C. 647.

[2] Bh. 2. 24, 31, 32, 35; 4. 52.

like the angels and archangels, until they come down to this earth voluntarily, as we may infer through later statements in the Pahlavi texts. They migrate to this world, and are immanent in the particular bodies that come into being after their divine images.

Everything that bears the hall-mark of belonging to the good creation has its Fravashi. Every object which has a name, common or proper, is endowed with a Fravashi. Ahura Mazda, the father of all existence, has his Fravashi, and so have the Amesha Spentas and the Yazatas.[3] Even the sky, waters, earth, plants, animals, and all objects of the kingdom of goodness, are not without their special Fravashis.[4] Thus beginning from the supreme godhead down to the tiniest shrub growing in the wilderness, every object has this divine element implanted in it. It is only Angra Mainyu and the demons, who are evil by nature, that are without it.

We are not told whether there are gradations and differences in the rank of these intelligences. We are not informed whether the Fravashi that guides the soul of a man during his lifetime is on the same scale as that of his horse or of the palm tree growing in his garden. A Fravashi working from within as the germinating factor, propelling power in the mineral, plant, or animal world, and one ministering as a guardian angel in man to lead his soul to perfection, could not be on the same level and find the same scope of work. Ahura Mazda and his ministering angels certainly do not need them as their guides to whom they may look as models, though they may look to the Fravashis as their co-workers in both the worlds.

During the lifetime of the individual, his Fravashi accompanies him to this earth. When a child is born its Fravashi that has existed from all eternity now comes down to this earth as the higher double of the child's soul. The soul is the ego proper, the real I-ness.

This Fravashi acts as a guardian spirit, a true friend, and an unerring guide of the soul. Hers is the divine voice of an infallible monitor who now advises and now admonishes the soul, now applauds its action, and now raises a voice of warning at a threatening spiritual danger. This divine agent in man, we may infer, sits enthroned by the side of the soul as an ideal ever

[3] Ys. 23. 2; Yt. 13. 80, 82, 85. [4] Yt. 13. 74, 86.

attracting the soul towards herself. This ideal goal is the one towards which the soul should strive. Though living in the tabernacle of clay on earth with the soul, and in the midst of the storms of passion and vice, the Fravashi remains unaffected and untouched, ever pure and ever sinless. From the time that the soul embarks on its unknown voyage to this world, as we can judge from Zoroastrian teachings, its Fravashi leads it, day and night, to the path of safety, and warns it of the rocks and shoals, storms and cyclones. If it is off the track, the Fravashi hoists the danger signal. The bark moves smoothly so long as the soul follows the wise counsels of its guide. But as soon as it revolts from the heavenly pilot, it exposes the bark to danger at every turn. The vessel now drifts along on the unmapped ocean without any one at the helm to direct it to the right course, is tossed on the roaring waves, is left to the mercy of the changing wind, and is in danger of being wrecked.

The soul alone is responsible for the good or evil deeds done in this world, and it receives reward or retribution in the next world according to its desert. At the death of the individual, when the soul thus advances to meet its fate, its guardian Fravashi returns to the celestial realm, but lives now an individualized life as the Fravashi of a certain person who has lived his short span of life on earth.

It may be noted, however, that a few Avestan passages seem to identify the souls and the Fravashis of the dead, a view which, as we shall see, comes to prevail more and more in the Pahlavi period. In fact, we may perhaps detect the interpolator's hand in the passages concerned.[4a]

Qualities of the Fravashis. The Fravashis are usually designated as the good, valiant, and holy. They are the liberal, the most valiant, the most holy, the most powerful, the most mighty, and the most effective.[5] They are the swiftly moving when invoked, the bestowers of victory, health, and glory.[6] Their friendship is good and lasting, and they are beautiful, health-giving, of high renown, and vanquishing in battle.[7] They are efficacious, the most beneficent, and the smiters of the arms of the tyrant foes.[8] They are girt with the blessings of piety as wide as the earth,

[4a] Ys. 16. 7; 26. 7, 11; 71. 23; Yt. 22. 39.
[5] Yt. 13. 75.
[6] Yt. 13. 23, 24.
[7] Yt. 13. 30.
[8] Yt. 13. 31

as long as a river, and as high as the sun.[9] They are the strongest in moving onwards, the least failing wielders of weapons, the invulnerable, the shield-bearing, clad with iron helmets and weapons.[10-11] Their power and efficiency are simply inconceivable and beyond description.[12]

Their work. Like the higher celestial beings, the Fravashis are allotted their respective tasks in the creation of Ahura Mazda. They are the ones who stood ready for help to the godhead when the two spirits first met to create the universe.[13] It is through them that Ahura Mazda maintains the sky and the earth.[14] Ahura Mazda expressly is stated as saying that, had they not rendered him help, animals and men could not have continued to exist, because the wicked Druj would have smitten them to death, except for the guardianship of the Fravashis.[15] The waters flow, and the plants spring forth, and the winds blow through their glory.[16] Through their radiance and glory females conceive offspring, and have easy childbirth.[17] Through them it is that Ahura Mazda forms and develops the organs of the child in the womb of its mother, and protects it from death;[18] moreover, patriotic sons, destined to win distinction, are born unto women on their account.[19] They first gave movement to the waters that stood for a long time without flowing.[20] The trees that stood without growing began to grow, and the stars and the moon and the sun that had stood motionless, owing to the opposition of the demons, received their movement through them [21] and have ever since gone along their paths of progress owing to the influence of the Fravashis.[22] They protect the river Ardvi Sura Anahita,[23] and watch over the sea Vourukasha and the stars Haptoiringa.[24]

Fravashis help the living. These spiritual forces wield great power in both the worlds, rendering great help to those who invoke them, and keeping watch and ward about the abodes in which they once had lived. In the field of battle, moreover, they help the fighting armies to victory. Awful and vanquishing in battle, they smite and rout the foes, and bring triumph unto

[9] Yt. 13. 32.
[10.11] Yt. 13. 26, 45.
[12] Yt. 13. 64.
[13] Yt. 13. 76.
[14] Yt. 13. 1, 2, 9, 22, 28, 29.
[15] Yt. 13. 12, 13.
[16] Yt. 13. 14.
[17] Yt. 13. 15.
[18] Yt. 13. 11, 22.
[19] Yt. 13. 16.
[20] Yt. 13. 53, 54.
[21] Yt. 13. 55-58.
[22] Yt. 13. 16.
[23] Yt. 13. 4.
[24] Yt. 13. 59, 60.

those who invoke them.[25] The heroes invoke them to succour them in the battle.[26] When the ruling chief who finds himself in danger on the battlefield invokes them with offerings, they come flying unto him like winged birds and fight gallantly in his behalf against his foes. They become to him a weapon and a shield; they guard him on every side, protecting him with the strength that a thousand men would use in guarding one man, so that neither sword, nor club, nor arrow, nor spear, nor any stone may injure him.[27] They rush down in great numbers in the thick of the battle to crush the foes.[28] They cause havoc in the battlefield, and smite the malice of the demons and wicked men.[29] The nations against whom the Fravashis march are smitten by their fifties, and hundreds, and thousands, and tens of thousands, and myriads.[30] Both the vanquisher who pursues his foe and the vanquished who flees from the field invoke them to grant them swiftness in running.[31] The Fravashis turn to help that side which has first invoked them with uplifted hands and heart-felt devotion.[32] They hasten for help to the righteous, but for harm to the wicked.[33] They are ever anxious to aid their kindred and countrymen, and they give course to the waters so that they may flow to the land they inhabited during their lifetime.[34]

Ahura Mazda advises Zarathushtra to invoke them for help whenever he finds himself in danger.[35] When the supplicant needs help of some specific nature, he invokes the Fravashi of one whom he knows to have been specially endowed with the corresponding virtue during his lifetime. For instance, Yima's Fravashi is invoked to enable one to withstand drought and death,[36] because that illustrious king is reported to have driven away these calamities from his kingdom. The Fravashi of king Thraetaona who is generally confounded by the later writers with Thrita, the reputed inventor of medicine, is invoked for help against itches, fevers, and other diseases.[37] Similarly, the Fravashis of other great men are invoked for help in the respective sphere in which they are believed to have been conspicuous during their lives.[38]

Fravashis of the dead long for sacrifices. These are eager

[25] Yt. 13. 40.
[26] Yt. 13. 23, 27.
[27] Yt. 13. 63, 69-72.
[28] Yt. 13. 40.
[29] Yt. 13. 33.
[30] Yt. 13. 48.
[31] Yt. 13. 35.
[32] Yt. 13. 47.
[33] Yt. 13. 39.
[34] Yt. 13. 65-68.
[35] Yt. 13. 19, 20.
[36] Yt. 13. 130.
[37] Yt. 13. 131; WFr. 2. 2.
[38] Yt. 13. 104, 105, 132-138.

to communicate with the living among whom they have lived on this earth. They desire that their descendants and kindred shall not forget them. They seek their praise and prayer, sacrifice and invocation.[39] They come down flying from their heavenly abode to the earth on the last ten days of the Zoroastrian calendar, which are specially consecrated to them, and interest themselves in the welfare of the living.

Fravashis bless if satiated, but curse when offended. The Fravashis are entreated by the living to be propitious to them. They are besought to come down from the heavenly regions to the sacrifices held in their honour. If they are propitiated with offerings, they bless their supplicants with riches and flocks, horses and chariots, and with offspring who will serve God and their country.[40] Those who piously solicit their benedictions receive these in abundance, for the Fravashis bring down unto them from the spiritual world the very best of blessings. But those who neglect or offend them are cursed; and their curse is terrible indeed. It brings untold harm to the family. Loving as the Fravashis are when propitiated, they become dreadful when offended.[41] Yet they never harm until they are vexed.[42] The wise, therefore, propitiate them to gain their good-will, and placate them to allay their wrath. The householder prays that they may walk satisfied in his house, that they may not depart offended from his abode, but may leave the house in joy, carrying the sacrifice and prayer to Ahura Mazda and the Amesha Spentas.[43] They are implored to accept the offerings and be propitiated thereby.[44] They are asked to come with riches as widespread as the earth, as vast as the rivers, as high as the sun, in order to help the righteous and harm the wicked.[45] Those who honour them attain to power and greatness.[46]

Fravashis of the righteous ones of one's family, clan, town, or country invoked individually. The survivors of the dead commemorate the pious memory of their departed ancestors. The members of a family sacrifice unto their elders, the citizens laud their patriots and heroes, and the devout revere the sacred memory of their sainted dead. The latter part of the Yasht that is consecrated to the Fravashis treats of the great person-

[39] Yt. 13. 49, 50.
[40] Yt. 13. 51, 52.
[41] Yt. 13. 31.
[42] Yt. 13. 30.
[43] Yt. 13. 156, 157.
[44] Yt. 13. 145, 147.
[45] Ys. 60. 4.
[46] Yt. 13. 18.

alities of Iran that have illumined the pages of her history in various ways.

Fravashis of the righteous ones of all ages and all places invoked collectively. These celestial beings are invoked in a body by the faithful. The supplicant generally winds up his prayers by announcing that he sacrifices unto the Fravashis of the righteous from the time of the first man, Gaya Maretan, up to the time of the advent of Saoshyant at the end of the world.[47] Not only are the Fravashis of the departed ones commemorated, but those of living persons, as well as those of persons that are still to be born in future ages, are also equally honoured with praise and invocation.[48]

In addition to this, the righteous ones of all the Aryan countries, nay, what is still more, even those who are righteous among the Turanians, the national foes of the Iranians, receive their share in this homage to the saintly ones.[49] The commemoration list ends with explicitly mentioning the righteous ones of all the countries of the world.[50] The individual is thus taught to recognize his fellowship with the human beings of all ages and all places. Herodotus attests that a Persian does not pray for himself, but for the whole nation and his king.[51]

The faithful may infer from the spirit that runs through the Zoroastrian scriptures that there are no breaks in the life story of humanity. Each individual is a unit in the long line of countless generations between the first and the last man. He realizes his individuality in his own age and place. Each generation is the product of the past and parent of the future. It finds itself placed in the midst of the religious, social, economical, and political institutions of the past and inherits the accumulated heritage of the wisdom and civilization of the collective humanity that has lived before it. The past has made the present in body, mind, and spirit; and the present has to make the future physically, mentally, and spiritually. No generation can live exclusively by itself and for itself. To the past it owes a deep debt of gratitude, to the future it is bound by parental duty. A wise parent instinctively works for the good of his children, and no age can be regardless of the material and spiritual welfare of

[47] Yt. 13. 145.
[48] Ys. 24. 5; 26. 6; Vsp. 11. 7; Yt. 13. 21.
[49] Yt. 13. 143.
[50] Yt. 13. 144.
[51] 1. 132.

those that are to follow it in time. Each age has its righteous persons by the million, who further the human progress. The Fravashis of such only are commemorated. Those that have wilfully chosen to tread the path of wickedness and hamper the onward march of humanity towards perfection do not share this honour, the highest that collective humanity confers upon its dutiful children of all ages and places.

Dual nature of the Zoroastrian ancestor-worship. The commemoration of the Fravashis of the dead represents but one phase of ancestor-worship. As we have already seen, this spiritual prototype of man is something apart from and above his soul. It is the soul that constitutes the individuality of his person, and it is natural for the survivors to feel that they should look to the soul of the dead for the continuity of communication with them. The sacrifices and prayers offered to the Fravashis are primarily for soliciting their help and favour. Those offered to the souls of the dead on the anniversaries soon take a vicarious form and rest on the central idea that the performance of rites by the descendants enables the souls of the dead to progress from a lower to a higher place in the next world. Thus man's Fravashi and soul both are thought to claim respectively their commemoration from the relatives of the departed one. These two distinct forms of ancestor-worship—the one of invoking the Fravashis of the dead for the good of the living, and the other of sacrificing unto the souls with the desire of contributing to their betterment in the next world—often overlap each other. The intermingling of the two becomes so complete that the souls and not the Fravashis are supposed to come down to the rituals even on the days originally consecrated to the Fravashis. In fact, their cult is practically forgotten, and the souls alone receive the entire share of the rituals performed by the living.

CHAPTER XVI

PERSONIFIED ABSTRACTIONS

The infinity of time and the immensity of space personified. Time and Space seem to have been the alternative answers to the early gropings of the primitive Iranian thinkers to find some solution for the problem of the origin of things in the universe; and these two elements, Time and Space, are incorporated in the Zoroastrian theology of the Later Avesta after being shorn of the power assigned to them in the pre-Zoroastrian period. In the extant Avestan texts they hardly have any individuality. They are barren concepts sharing invocations along with the celestial beings and sanctified objects. The later works, however, speak of sects flourishing as late as the Sasanian period and even much later, who held these concepts as the highest categories in religious thought and drew the names of their sects from them.

Zrvan Akarana. This genius of Boundless Time, like several abstract ideas which are in course of time personified and yet are not classified among the Yazatas, is not listed as an angel. He is often invoked by name in company with Space and Vayu, the genius of wind.[1] He has made the path which the wicked soul has to traverse,[2] and the plants grow in the manner that he has ordained according to the will of Ahura Mazda and the archangels.[3]

The Avesta distinguishes sharply between two different kinds of time, infinite and finite. The term *zrvan akarana*, 'boundless time,' is also used in its ordinary meaning of the unlimited time or eternity. It is said that Ahura Mazda created the sacred spell Ahuna Vairya in the Boundless Time.[4]

Zrvan Daregho-khvadhata, 'Time of Long Duration,' on the other hand, is a limited period portioned out from the Boundless Time. This finite time is also personified and is invoked by name along with the Boundless Time.[5] The Younger Avestan

[1] Ys. 72. 10; Vd. 19. 13; Ny. 1. 8.
[2] Vd. 19. 29.
[3] Yt. 13. 56.
[4] Vd. 19. 9.
[5] Ys. 72. 10; Ny. 1. 8.

texts do not furnish us with any data to enable us to form any idea of this concept, but we learn from the later scriptures that it refers to the world's cycle of twelve thousand years.

Thwasha. Space, or the infinite expanse, is faintly personified under the name Thwasha Khvadhata, or Sovereign Space. It is generally invoked along with the genius of time.[6] In one place it is depicted as going alongside of Mithra.[7] Like Time, it is not ranked among the angels.

[6] Ys. 72. 10; Vd. 19. 13; Ny. 1. 8. [7] Yt. 10. 66.

CHAPTER XVII

BAGHAS

The divinities. One of the names for divinity in general is Bagha, literally meaning 'dispenser.' We can trace its history far back to the Indo-European period. Unlike the term Yazata, which retains its place as a divine appellation throughout the history of Zoroastrianism, Bagha soon loses its significance in the Avestan texts. The inscriptions of the Achaemenian kings do not speak of the heavenly beings as Yazatas, but they speak of them under the designation Bagha, as noted below. The Avestan texts, on the contrary, use the term *bagha* hardly six times throughout the extant literature, and by the time that we reach the Pahlavi period Bagha is used to represent the idea of divinity in general,[1] and also as a title of the Sasanian monarchs who zealously upheld the divine right of kings.[1a]

Ahura Mazda himself is a Bagha.[1b] Baga, the cognate of the Avestan Bagha, is most freely applied to Ahura Mazda in the Old Persian Inscriptions. Ahura Mazda is the greatest of all Bagas.[2] Besides the supreme godhead, Mithra is expressly mentioned as a Baga.[3] This does not exhaust the list of the Baghas, for, though not mentioned by name, the texts refer to others besides these two.[4] In the Later Avesta, compound forms of Bagha are also found, which signify 'allotted by God.'[5] Bagabigna and Bagabukhsha, the names of persons, and Bagayadi, the name of a month, are the instances of the Baga compounds that are found in the Inscriptions.[6]

[1] Sg. 4. 8, 29; 10. 69; Dk. SBE. vol. 37. bk. 8. 15. 1, p. 34.
[1a] Sg. 10. 70; cf. Mordtmann, *Zur Pehlevi-Münzkunde*, in ZDMG. 34. 1-162.
[1b] Ys. 10. 10; 70. 1.
[2] Dar. Pers. d. 1; Xer. Elv. 1; Xer. Van. 1.
[3] Yt. 10. 141; Artaxerxes Ochus, Pers. a [b]. 4.
[4] Yt. 10. 141; Bh. 4. 61, 62; Dar. Pers. d. 3; Xer. Pers. b. 3; Xer. Van. 3.
[5] Vsp. 7. 3; Yt. 8. 35; Vd. 19. 23; 21. 5, 9, 13.
[6] Bh. 4. 18; 1. 13.

Bagha plays an insignificant part as Fate personified in the Younger Avesta, although this personification becomes more pronounced as the personification of Fate in the later Pahlavi period. There is, however, a solitary passage in the Vendidad, and it may be late, which tells us that a man who is drowned in water or burnt by fire is not killed by water or fire, but by Fate.[7] Cambyses said that it was not in the power of man to counteract Fate.[8]

The term *bagha,* moreover, is also frequently used in its ordinary meaning, 'portion,' 'allotment.'

[7] Vd. 5. 8, 9.

[8] Herodotus, 3. 65.

CHAPTER XVIII

EVIL

Dualism in evolution. The original Gathic conception of the reality of evil is more emphasized by the theologians of the Later Avestan period, and the personality of the Prince of Evil becomes at the same time more pronounced. The hardest crux that confronts the Zoroastrian divines, as it does every theologian, is, how Ahura Mazda, the father of goodness, can be made responsible for the existence of evil in this world. The prophet had already taught the existence of an independent power as the originator of evil. The idea inherent in this teaching is now elaborately worked out until every object that is branded by man as evil is ascribed to the agency of the Evil Spirit. A ban is put upon everything in the universe that is opposed to Asha's realm of righteousness, even to the detail of noxious creatures and poisonous plants. They belong to the evil creation. Herodotus and Plutarch inform us that the Magi held it a virtue to kill noxious creatures.[1] From the standpoint of evil, therefore, it is easy to understand that such a usurper king as Azhi Dahaka, who took a fiendish delight in feasting his eyes upon the most atrocious crimes perpetrated under his rule, was sent to this world by the archfiend as the apostle of destruction and death.[2] Hail and hurricane, cyclone and thunderstorm, plague and pestilence, famine and drought, in fact everything that harms man and decimates population, belong to the realm of evil. Angra Mainyu has cast an evil eye upon the good creation of Ahura Mazda, and by his glance of malice introduced corruption and disease into the universe.[3] The opposition between the Good and Evil Spirit is so pronounced that distinctive linguistic expressions are now used for both. There are separate words used for the organs, movements, and speech of the Good Spirit and his creation, and for those of the Evil Spirit and his world; and this rule applies to

[1] Herod. 1. 140; Plutarch, Is. et Os. 46.
[2] Ys. 9. 8; Yt. 17. 34.
[3] Vd. 22. 2, 9, 15.

wicked men in general as well as to the noxious creatures. The man of the kingdom of goodness 'speaks,' but the wicked one 'howls' or 'roars'; the former 'eats,' but the latter 'devours'; the good one 'walks,' but the wicked 'rushes'; the one has a 'head,' but the other has a 'skull'; the one dwells in a 'house,' the other in a 'burrow.'[4] Thus the antithesis between good and evil becomes even more and more prominent. It is indelible. Evil remains as real a factor as good, as independent, and as active. There is a pronounced antithesis and active warfare between the two rival spirits, and reconciliation or peace between them is impossible. Every prayer in the Younger Avesta begins with the exhortation to propitiate the Good Spirit and abjure the Evil One. Man is warned to guard himself from the wiles of Angra Mainyu.

The earliest non-Zoroastrian writers speak of Zoroastrianism as the religion of dualism. Early Greek writers, who, we can safely assert, were contemporary at least with the Later Avestan period, speak of the religion of Iran as based on the belief in two rival spirits. Hippolytus relates, on the authority of Aristoxenus,[5] that the Persians believed in two primeval causes of existence, the first being Light, or the father, and the second, Darkness, the mother.[6] On the authority of Diogenes Laertius we have the assurance that Eudoxus and Aristotle wrote of these two powers as Zeus, or Oromazdes, and Hades, or Areimanios.[7] Plutarch[8] narrates, in the same tone, that Oromazdes came from light, and Areimanios from darkness. The Good Spirit created six archangels and other divine beings, and the Evil One created as a counterpoise to them six arch-fiends, and other infernal creatures, and the devil's activity of counter-creation extended also to the physical world, for in opposition to the creation of good animals and plants by Oromazdes, he brought forth noxious creatures and poisonous plants. His opposition permeates the entire creation and will last up to the end of time, when he will be defeated and be made to disappear.[9] Plutarch

[4] See Frachtenberg, *Etymological Studies in Ormazdian and Ahrimanian words in the Avesta in Spiegel Memorial Volume*, pp. 269-289, Bombay, 1908.

[5] About 320 B.C.

[6] *Refutatio Haeresium*, I. 2.

[7] *Proaem.* 8.

[8] A.D. 46-120.

[9] Is. et Os. 46, 47.

himself further mentions, on the authority of Theopompus,[10] the loss of whose excursus dealing with Zoroastrianism in antiquity is still to be deplored, that the good God ruled for three thousand years, and the Evil One for another three thousand years. At the expiration of six thousand years, they entered into a conflict which still goes on, and which will end in the final annihilation of the fiend.[11] Diogenes confirms this statement.[12] All this has its historic bearing upon the whole realm of Zoroastrianism in its relation to the great religions of the world, for each and all of them have had to deal with the problem of evil in its application to the life of man.

Angra Mainyu

The titles of the Evil Spirit. Angra Mainyu is the Demon of Demons,[13] who has crept into the creation of the Good Spirit.[14] His standing epithet is 'full of death.'[15] He is the worst liar.[16] He is a tyrant,[17] of evil creation,[18] of evil religion,[19] and of evil knowledge,[20] and of malignity,[21] as well as inveterately wicked.[22] He is the doer of evil deeds.[23] The north is the seat of Angra Mainyu,[24] where he lives with his evil brood in the bowels of the earth to make onslaughts on the world of righteousness.[25]

The counter-creations of Angra Mainyu. The Avestan texts persistently speak of the creations of the two spirits, Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu;[26] moreover the first chapter of the Vendidad contains a list of the good places created by Ahura

[10] 300 B.C.
[11] Is. et Os. 47.
[12] *Proaem.* 9.
[13] Vd. 19. 1, 43.
[14] Yt. 13. 77.
[15] Ys. 61. 2; Yt. 3. 13; 10. 97; 13. 71; 15. 56; 17. 19; 18. 2; Vd. 1. 3; 19. 1, 43, 44; 22. 2; Aog. 4, 28.
[16] Yt. 3. 13.
[17] Vd. 19. 3.
[18] Ys. 61. 2; Vd. 19. 6.
[19] WFr. 4. 2.
[20] Aog. 4.
[21] Yt. 17. 19; Vd. 11. 10; 19. 1, 5, 9, 12, 44.
[22] Ys. 27. 1; Yt. 10. 118; 13. 71, 78.
[23] Yt. 19. 97.
[24] Vd. 19. 1.
[25] Yt. 19. 44.
[26] Ys. 57. 17; Yt. 11. 12; 13. 76; 15. 3, 43, 44; Vd. 3. 20; 13. 1, 2, 5, 6, 16.

Mazda, over against which the Evil One counter-created various physical and moral evils to thwart the peace and happiness of the good creation. It is the Evil Spirit who has infected the bodies of mortals with disease and decay;[27] it is from him that come deformities of body;[28] and he is ever perpetrating wrong against the world of goodness. Angra Mainyu corrupts the moral nature of man. He it was who called into existence the tyrant Azhi Dahaka for the destruction of the creatures of righteousness.[29] The rival spirits have divided their sphere of possession and activity of the wind of Vayu, a part of which belongs to the Good Spirit, whereas the other part is included in the kingdom of the Evil Spirit.[30]

Angra Mainyu grovels before Zarathushtra. In his malicious thoughts and teachings, his intellect and faith, his words and deeds, and in conscience and soul, the Evil Spirit is exactly and diametrically the opposite of Ahura Mazda.[31] Angra Mainyu practises deceitful wiles, and incites man to rebel against the divine authority. As the arch-betrayer he allures man to abjure the Good Spirit. On the advent of Zarathushtra, as the true prophet, this soul of righteousness stupefies him, because he sees in the earthly embodiment of Ahura Mazda's will his eternal foe, who will by holy teaching and preaching threaten the overthrow of his infernal empire of wickedness.[32] The Prince of Darkness, in tempting Zarathushtra, promises him the sovereignty of the world, if he will only reject the faith of Mazda; but the prophet replies that he will not renounce the excellent religion, either for body or life.[33] Angra Mainyu determines to overthrow such faith on the part of the prophet to whom he is so opposed, and resolves to wreak vengeance upon him. He clamours for the death of the sage, and lets loose legions of demons to assail him. But the chosen of Ahura Mazda is found to be an impregnable rock, not to be moved. The blessed one scatters his assailants in flight. They rush howling and weeping to the regions of darkness, or hell.[34] Defeated and dismayed, the

[27] Vd. 20. 3; 22. 2.
[28] Vd. 2. 29, 37.
[29] Ys. 9. 8.
[30] Ys. 22. 24; 25. 5; Yt. 15. 5, 42, 57; Sr. 1. 21; 2. 21.
[31] Ys. 19. 15.
[32] Yt. 17. 19.
[33] Vd. 19. 6, 7.
[34] Vd. 19. 46, 47.

Evil Spirit bewails that Zarathushtra alone has accomplished what all the Yazatas together were unable to do; in other words, he is the only one who has baffled the devil and his infernal crew.[35] At the beginning of creation the recital of Ahuna Vairya by Mazda put Angra Mainyu to flight,[36] and as a consequence the Spirit of Evil crouches in abject servility to Mazda's prophet, who has hurled him backward into the darkest abyss.

Angra Mainyu's final defeat. Since the time when the Evil Spirit broke into the world of Righteousness,[37] a constant war is being waged against the hosts of Wickedness by the powers of Righteousness, as shall be to the last when Righteousness shall triumph over Wickedness. The faithful, accordingly, pray that Wickedness may be routed and Righteousness may rule for all in all. Every child of man has had his share in this universal strife and struggle. Those that through ignorance have not been steadfast in the path of goodness, and have been led to revolt from their creator, are those that have been victims to the clutch of Angra Mainyu. As the world progresses towards the true knowledge of the excellent Faith, mankind will embrace Righteousness and thus weaken the power of Wickedness. The perfection of mankind will thus come to pass; and finally the Father of Evil and all imperfection, having been deserted by his misguided followers, will be impotent. This will be the final crisis at which the Sovereign of Evil, bereft of power, will bow to his final fate,[38-39] and will hide himself forever in the bowels of the earth.

Daevas

The Demons. The *daevas*, or demons, are of both sexes, as are their heavenly counterparts. Over against the *vispe Yazata*, or 'all angels,' stand in sharp contradistinction the *vispe daeva*, 'all demons.'[40] The greatest of all the demons is Angra Mainyu,[41] who has created these fiends in opposition to the Yazatas. The archangelic host of the Amesha Spentas, and some of the angel band of Yazatas have each a Daeva as a

[35] Yt. 17. 19, 20.
[36] Ys. 19. 15.
[37] Yt. 13. 77.
[38-39] Yt. 19. 96.
[40] Ys. 27. 1; 57. 18; Yt. 9. 4; 19. 81; Vd. 10. 16.
[41] Vd. 19. 1, 43.

special adversary engaged in thwarting the divine will. Plutarch states that when Oromazdes created the six archangels, Areimanios counter-created an equal number of fiends.[42] The arrangement, however, is perfunctory, if we examine the Younger Avestan texts. The personality of the majority of these demons is not sharply defined, and the account of their activities, as found in the Later Avestan texts, is very vague and meagre. Some are mentioned simply by name, without any account of their function being added; it is only through the help of the Pahlavi literature that we can get a more definite idea of their place in the infernal group. Not only are the wicked spirits spoken of as the Daevas, but also the nomadic hordes of Gilan and Mazanderan, realms designated as Mazainya in the Avesta; that constantly burst with their infidel hordes of invaders into the settlements of the faithful, menacing their properties, devastating their fields, and carrying away their flocks, are branded as Daevas.[43] The wicked sodomite is equally a daeva, and a worshipper of daevas, as well as a paramour of daevas, he is a daeva during life, and remains a daeva after death.[44] All moral wrongs and physical obstacles are personified and catalogued in this scheme of demonology. To every disease is assigned its own demon as having been the cause of the malady. The germs of disease and death, of plague and pestilence, are spoken of metaphorically as Daevas. The Fire of Ahura Mazda serves to kill such Daevas by thousands wherever the scent of the holy flame may spread.[45] It is said that if the sun were not to rise, and the light of day should not curb their power to do harm under the cover of darkness, the Daevas would kill all living beings.[46] In connection with such ideas of the power of evil it may be understood that the Avestan texts teach that the ground wherein are interred the corpses of the dead is infested with myriads of the demons, who feed and revel on the spot as a consequence, for such a place is their favourite haunt.[47] Even the dropping of nails and hair on the ground is an act of uncleanness that is equivalent to offering a

[42] Is. et Os. 47.
[43] Ys. 27. 1; 57. 17; Yt. 5. 22; 9. 4; 10. 97; 13. 137; Vd. 10. 14, 16; 17. 9, 10.
[44] Vd. 8. 31, 32.
[45] Vd. 8. 80.
[46] Yt. 6. 3; Ny. 1. 13.
[47] Vd. 7. 55-58.

sacrifice to the demons, as spirits of pollution. Such a careless act of uncleanness results in the production of demoniacal foes to health and purity such as lice and moths, which are equally called the daevas.[48] The northern regions are peopled with the demons.[49]

The number of the demons is said to be legion, even though the Avestan texts mention only about forty-five more explicitly by name.[50] As in other cases of the fiendish crew of hell, many of these evil powers have no story in particular to tell, but we shall deal with the more important ones in the sections that immediately follow.

The work of the demons. The demons have all been allotted their special provinces of work in both the worlds. Active work and strenuous exertion on the part of man deal them blows; for example, when the farmer tills his fields and sows his corn, the demons are dismayed. When the corn grows the demons start in dismay and faint, they grumble and rush to their hovels.[51] They spread uncleanness on the earth,[52] that the creatures may thereby suffer, and attack and overpower him who moves about without the sacred girdle.[53] They sought for the death of Zarathushtra.[54] They prevented the stars, the moon, and the sun from moving, until the Fravashis showed them their path.[55]

Means to confound them. The faithful recite the holy spells to dispel the demons. Zarathushtra himself, at the outset, baffled them by uttering the holy word.[56] As stated elsewhere, these evil spirits are put to flight at the recital of the Ahuna Vairya, Gathic stanzas, and the other spells,[57] and the drinking of the consecrated Haoma, moreover, brings destruction to them.[58]

Those who strike terror into the hearts of the demons. Ahura Mazda is invoked to smite the demons,[59] and Haurvatat, Ardvi Sura, Drvaspa, and the Fravashis are invoked by the kings

[48] Vd. 17. 2, 3.
[49] Vd. 7. 2; 19. 1.
[50] See Jackson, *Iranische Religion*, in GIrPh. 2. 656-662.
[51] Vd. 3. 32.
[52] Yt. 10. 50.
[53] Vd. 18. 54, 55.
[54] Vd. 19. 3.
[55] Yt. 13. 57.
[56] Yt. 13. 90.
[57] Yt. 3. 7; 11. 6; Vd. 10. 13-16.
[58] Ys. 10. 6.
[59] Ys. 27. 1.

and heroes to the same end.[60] Asha Vahishta smites the worst of the demons by thousands,[61] while they tremble before Sraosha, who wields a club in his hands to strike upon their skulls.[62] Three times each day and each night Sraosha comes down upon this earth with his terrible mace to fight against the demons.[63] Mithra likewise levels his club at their skulls and smites them down.[64] The kings Haoshyangha, Takhma Urupi, and Vishtaspa triumphed and ruled over the demons.[65] Of course the demons are terrified at the birth of Zarathushtra,[66] who routed them at the outset.[67] Not one of them, nor all together, could compass the hallowed sage's death;[68] they vanished overcome at his sight.[69] In fact all those demons that roamed about on the earth in human form sank beneath the earth at the appearance of the prophet.[70] For all these reasons it may be understood that in the realm of the hereafter the demons quail at the sight of a righteous soul advancing towards heaven, in the same manner as a sheep trembles in the presence of a wolf.[71]

The Daeva-worshippers. In opposition to the faithful who are called Mazdayasnians, or the worshippers of Mazda, all unbelievers and wicked persons are styled the Daevayasnians, that is, as being worshippers of the demons. The two worlds of the righteous and the wicked are rent asunder. The barrier between them cannot be broken. Mazda extends his helping hand to the righteous, but leaves the wicked to themselves. Nay, he hates them.

As the dregvant, or the wicked one, stands in antithesis to the ashavan, the righteous one, in the sphere of morals, so the Daevayasnian, or worshipper of demons, stands in contradistinction to the faithful Mazdayasnian in the matter of belief. Both words, *dregvant* and *daevayasna,* are Zoroastrian synonyms also of heretic. The life of a Daevayasnian is not of equal value with that of a Mazdayasnian; this is shown in the Avesta by the fact that the new surgeon who intends practising among the Mazda-worshippers must first prove his skill on three of the Daeva-worshippers; and if his operations are successful he may

[60] Yt. 4. 2; 5. 22, 26, 68, 77; 9. 4; 13. 45, 137.
[61] Yt. 2. 11, 12; 3. 10, 14.
[62] Vd. 19. 15.
[63] Ys. 57. 31.
[64] Yt. 6. 5; 10. 26, 97, 128-133.
[65] Yt. 19. 26, 28, 29, 84.
[66] Vd. 19. 46.
[67] Yt. 13. 89.
[68] Yt. 8. 44.
[69] Yt. 19. 80.
[70] Ys. 9. 15.
[71] Vd. 19. 33; Aog. 19.

then be given permission to practise among the faithful, but if his tests prove fatal he is to be disqualified forever.[72] In regard to acts of worship, moreover, those misguided sacrificers who bring libations unto Ardvi Sura after sunset are classed among the worshippers of the Daevas, for the libations brought after the sun has set reach the demons.[73]

Zoroastrianism is anti-daeva, or against the demons. In the hymn of the Confession of Faith that the faithful recites from the time when he as a child is invested with the sacred cord, and which he thereafter repeats throughout his life at the opening of each daily prayer, he proclaims himself a worshipper of Mazda and a foe to the demons.[74] In this antagonistic attitude to all that is evil, he abjures everything relating to the demons and all that may accrue from them, exactly as the prophet Zarathushtra did.[75] One of the Nasks, or books of the Avesta, moreover, derives its name from this very expression and is called, accordingly, the Vendidad, more correctly 'Vidaeva-dāta,' or 'law against the demons.'

Aka Manah

The demon of Evil Mind. Angra Mainyu has created Aka Manah, or Evil Mind, as a counterpoise to the Good Mind of Vohu Manah. The fiend occupies, after his father, Angra Mainyu, the second place among the whole host of demons. In spite of this, he figures very rarely in the Younger Avesta and we do not hear so much of his activity as in the Pahlavi works. Aka Manah, in the scene of the temptation of the prophet, joins in the stratagem of the demon Buiti to assail Zarathushtra, and as an impersonation of the baser side of the human mind he practises his wiles by guileful words of seduction for the sainted leader to abandon the course of righteousness, but the holy prophet baffles the fiend in his attempt.[76] This evil being, moreover, takes part unsuccessfully in the contest between the powers of the Good Spirit and the Evil Spirit to seize the Divine Glory.[77] The ethics of Zoroastrianism naturally demands that Aka Manah's power shall be ultimately destroyed, and accordingly he will be vanquished by Vohu Manah at the end of the present cycle.[78]

[72] Vd. 7. 36-40.
[73] Yt. 5. 94, 95; Nr. 68.
[74] Ys. 12. 1.
[75] Ys. 12. 4-6.
[76] Vd. 19. 4.
[77] Yt. 19. 46.
[78] Yt. 19. 96.

Druj

The embodiment of wickedness. Druj is feminine in gender and, like other demons, is a spirit.[79] This evil genius of Wickedness of the Gathic period preserves her original traits in the Yasna and Yasht literature, but it seems, if we judge rightly, that she gradually undergoes a transformation in the Vendidad. The Gathic prayer of the faithful to enable the true believer to smite Druj, and thereby to weaken the Kingdom of Wickedness, is still echoed in the first part of the Avestan period.[80] The house-lord, for example, invokes Asha to drive away Druj from his house, and the faithful asks for strength to enable him to smite Druj, while he likewise implores the good Vayu to remove the fiendish Druj.[81] King Vishtaspa, as a champion warring against all that is evil, drove away Druj from the world of Righteousness;[82] and even Ahura Mazda himself acknowledges that had not the Fravashis helped him, Druj would have overpowered the entire world.[83] In the same manner we can conceive why Mithra should be invoked by cattle that have been led astray to the den of Druj by the wicked.[84] Druj is designated as of evil descent and darkness,[85] and devilish by nature.[86] It is through the help of the religion of Mazda that the Druj can be driven away from the world; this is expressly the saying of Ahura Mazda to his prophet.[87] At the final renovation Saoshyant, the saviour, will overcome the Druj among mankind;[88] she will then perish utterly and forever with her hundredfold brood.[89]

Other Drujes. The Gathas knew but one Druj, the one that works in opposition to Asha. In the later Avestan texts Druj becomes a class designation of minor female demons. These fiends are styled the Drujes, and Yt. 2. 11 speaks of *vispe druj,* 'all drujes,' in the same strain as *vispe Yazata,* 'all Yazatas,' and *vispe daeva,* 'all demons.' From the sacred texts we learn that there are drujes who come openly, and there are those that come in secret, and again there are those that defile by mere contact.[90] The term *druj* itself is loosely applied likewise to other demons

[79] Yt. 1. 19; 11. 3; 13. 71.
[80] Ys. 61. 5; Yt. 1. 28.
[81] Ys. 60. 5; Yt. 24. 25; Vd. 20. 8.
[82] Yt. 19. 93.
[83] Yt. 13. 12, 13.
[84] Yt. 10. 86.
[85] Yt. 19. 95.
[86] Ys. 9. 8; 57. 15; Yt. 5. 34; Vd. 8. 21; 18. 31 f.
[87] Vd. 19. 12, 13.
[88] Yt. 13. 129.
[89] Yt. 19. 12.
[90] Yt. 4. 6.

and wicked persons. The demon Buiti, for instance, is designated as a druj,[91] and the demoniacal Azhi Dahaka, who was sent to this world by the arch-fiend as a scourge to the world of Righteousness, is called a druj. The daevas, moreover, when baffled in their foul attempt to kill Zarathushtra, howl out that he is a veritable druj to every druj.[92] The conviction of the pious that Druj will perish at the hands of Asha Vahishta is for all time firm, because Sraosha appears on the field as the best smiter of Druj.[93] In a lengthy disputation, moreover, Sraosha extorts from the fiendish impersonation, Druj, the secret of how mankind by their various misdeeds impregnate her and her brood of fiends; that is, in simpler language, he learns from her by what particular works man increases the Druj's domain of wickedness.[94]

Druj as the personification of bodily impurity under the name Nasu. Purity of body, mind, and spirit go together to constitute a righteous man. The Gathas pre-eminently speak of the ethical virtues and purity of soul. Asha presides over Righteousness, and Druj acts as the evil genius of Wickedness. The greater portion of the Vendidad, however, contains priestly legislation for purity of body, as well as of the soul, and gives elaborate rules for the cleansing of those defiled by dead matter. The uncleanness embodied in the very term druj is now personified as Druj Nasu; her abode is in the burrow at the neck of the mountain Arezura in the northern region, but at the same time her presence is everywhere manifest on this earth.[95] Her chief function is to spread defilement and decay in the world. Immediately after the death of an individual, when the soul leaves the body and decomposition sets in, the Druj Nasu comes flying from the north in the shape of a despicable fly, and takes possession of the corpse.[96] She is expelled, however, when a dog or the corpse-eating birds have gazed at the dead body,[97] and when certain pious formulas have been recited. In reply to the inquiry how one may best drive away the Druj Nasu that rushes from the dead and defiles the living, Ahura Mazda bids the faithful to recite the holy spells.[98] When the purificatory rites have been performed and the sacred formulas uttered upon the one defiled by the dead, the Druj Nasu becomes weaker and

[91] Vd. 19. 1-3.
[92] Vd. 19. 46.
[93] Yt. 3. 17; 11. 3.
[94] Vd. 18. 30-59.
[95] Vd. 3. 7.
[96] Vd. 7. 1, 2.
[97] Vd. 7. 3.
[98] Yt. 4. 5; Vd. 10. 1.

weaker and flees from one part of the body to the other, until finally she vanishes towards the northern regions.[99] Whoso offers for consecration water that has in any way been defiled by the dead, or proffers libations after the sun has set, even though with good intent, feeds the Druj and thereby hinders the work of righteousness.[100] The religion of Mazda, as a faith paramount, dispels best this Druj of defilement.[101]

The barrier between the ashavans and dregvants is still impassable. Though the concept Druj as the genius of wickedness has undergone a change in the Later Avesta, the adjectival form, *dregvant,* meaning wicked, as opposed to *ashavan,* righteous, remains unaltered. This designation is applied equally to bad men and to demons, in the same manner as it used to be in the Gathas. Along with the employment of this term, the application of the derogatory title *ashemaogha,* literally meaning 'one who destroys Asha, Righteousness,' has come into vogue and is equally applied to the wicked. Perhaps there is this difference in usage: that *dregvant* is an ethical appellation of unrighteous men, whereas *ashemaogha* seems to be a theological and ritual designation of one who deviates from the prescribed teachings of the established church and who preaches heresy both as regards the doctrines of the faith and the rules of ceremonial. The *ashemaogha* is generally to be understood as equivalent to the unrighteous. Any one who undertakes to cleanse a person defiled by the dead, without being well-versed in the Zoroastrian rules of cleanness, is also an *ashemaogha.* Such a man retards the progress of the world by his false deed.[102] If a priest of this character were to give a benediction, his words of blessing would go no further than his lips.[103] Whoso gives the consecrated food to a sinner of that type brings calamity to his own country.[104] He himself is a heretic, for he does not acknowledge any temporal or spiritual master.[105] Ahura Mazda accordingly advises Zarathushtra to recite the divine names when he wishes to rout the malice of any such apostate;[106] Vayu likewise enjoins upon him to utter his sacred names when in danger of being so harassed.[107]

[99] Vd. 9. 12-26.
[100] Vd. 7. 78, 79.
[101] Vd. 19. 12, 13.
[102] Vd. 9. 51, 52.
[103] Vd. 18. 11.
[104] Vd. 18. 12.
[105] Yt. 13. 105.
[106] Yt. 1. 10, 11.
[107] Yt. 15. 51.

Indar

A god in the Vedas, a demon in the Avesta. This demon furnishes us with an instance of degrading one of the great Indian divinities to the rank of a demon in the Iranian theology. He is mentioned in the Boghaz-keui tablets, recently discovered in Asia Minor, that are supposed to date from about 1400 B.C. His name occurs but twice in the extant Avestan texts; he is mentioned as one of the ribald crew routed by Zarathushtra;[108] and in another passage a spell mentioning him by name is recited to drive away the demons.[109] These two Avestan passages, however, do not give us an inkling of the function of this fiend. In the Pahlavi period he assumes the part of Asha Vahishta's adversary.

Saurva

Foe to the archangel Khshathra Vairya. The Indian counterpart of the demon Saurva is Sharva. The Avestan texts, which make two mentions of the name of this demon, do not give us his life-story.[110] In the diabolical host he is the adversary of the archangel Khshathra Vairya, through whom shall be established the Kingdom of Ahura Mazda.

Taromaiti

She thwarts devotion. This feminine demoniacal impersonation of heresy and counterpart of Spenta Armaiti is to be smitten by the recital of the sacred formulas; she will flee away as soon as the Airyaman Ishya prayer is uttered.[111] The faithful, in consequence, pray that the genius of devotion may dispel this demoness from their houses.[112]

Naonghaithiya

A demon of incipient personality. Naonghaithya corresponds to the Vedic Nasatya, the epithet of the heavenly Ashvins, and is likewise mentioned in the Boghaz-keui tablets, but is classed in the Zoroastrian works among the evil powers. The demon is twice mentioned in the Avestan texts,[113] but the passages in ques-

[108] Vd. 19. 43.
[109] Vd. 10. 9.
[110] Vd. 10. 9; 19. 43.
[111] Yt. 3. 8, 11, 15.
[112] Ys. 60. 5.
[113] Vd. 10. 9; 19. 43.

tion shed no real light on the sphere of his activity. During the Pahlavi period, however (and the same may reasonably be presumed for the Avesta), Naonghaithya, or Naunghas, as he is then called, is seen working in antagonism to Spenta Armaiti.

Taurvi and Zairicha

Taurvi and Zairicha as adversaries of Haurvatat and Ameretat. The names of the dual demons Taurvi and Zairicha personify, in later texts at least, fever and thirst. They occur together and are mentioned in two places in the Younger Avesta,[114] yet without any special description of their work. They are in the Pahlavi texts depicted as the adversaries of the dual divinities Haurvatat and Ameretat, whose active mission in the world has been described above.

Astovidhotu

The fiend of death. As indicated etymologically by the root of the Avestan words *maretan* and *mashya,* man is mortal. This mortality applies to his material frame only. At death he dies in the flesh, but he lives forever in the spirit. Astovidhotu, literally 'the bone-divider,' who impersonates death, awaits all. When a man is burnt by fire or drowned in water, it is Astovidhotu who binds his breath and hastens him to an unnatural death.[115] Man trembles at Astovidhotu's sight.[116] The demon silently creeps to capture his victim, pouncing upon him so suddenly that the unfortunate one remains unaware of his doom. He cannot be won over by favor or by bribe. He respects not rank or position, but he mercilessly captures all.[117] Every one eagerly wishes to put off the moment of this catastrophe, for none likes to hasten to the jaws of this all-devouring demon. The philosopher may speak of death with sublime resignation, the theologian may console himself by depicting death as the birth into a higher life, the mystic may long for the dissolution of the body as a heaven-sent liberation of the spirit, but the majority of humanity thirst for life and thirst for a long life. The death-toll which Astovidhotu exacts from the world is appalling. On that account

[114] Vd. 10. 9; 19. 43.
[115] Vd. 5. 8, 9.
[116] Aog. 57.
[117] Aog. 70-73.

Mithra and Sraosha are invoked by the faithful to protect them from the assaults of Astovidhotu,[118] and Ahura Mazda's divine aid protects the child in its mother's womb from the onslaughts of this demon.[119] The man who marries and rears a family is hard-working, and nourishes his body with meat, is able the better to withstand Astovidhotu than a celibate.[120]

Vizaresha

This demon's work. The demon Vizaresha, 'the dragger away,' lies in wait for the wicked souls at the gate of hell, when justice is administered to the souls on the third night after the bodily deaths of men. No sooner do the heavenly judges pass their verdict of being guilty on a soul than Vizaresha pounces upon his victim and mercilessly drags the wretched soul into the bottomless hell.[121]

Kunda

A demon at the gate of hell. Sraosha is invoked to smite this demon. He is drunken without drinking, and hurls the souls of the wicked into hell.[122] There are spells to rout the fiend and his evil progeny.[123]

Bushyansta

Sloth personified. Idleness and inactivity tend to strengthen the Kingdom of Evil. The demoness Bushyansta, or sloth personified, literally 'procrastination,' is commissioned by Angra Mainyu to inculcate the habit of sleep and procrastination among mankind. She, the long-handed, as she is called,[124] lulls the whole living world to inordinate slumber. Timely sleep as such is of Ahura Mazda's making and it receives even adoration;[125] but Bushyansta, the inordinate, tempts the idle to be unduly long in bed,[126] and thus prevents the practice of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds.[127] At dawn the cock Parodarsh, whose name literally means 'one who sees ahead,' flapping his wings and crowing aloud, warns slumbering humanity of the stratagem of

[118] Ys. 57. 25; Yt. 10. 93. [119] Vd. 19. 41. [120] Vsp. 7. 3.
[121] Yt. 13. 11, 28. [122] Vd. 11. 9, 12. [123] Yt. 22. 42.
[124] Vd. 4. 47-49. [125] Vd. 11. 9; 18. 16, 24. [126] Vd. 18. 17, 25.
[127] Vd. 19. 29.

Bushyansta, and informs the faithful that it is time to wake up and proceed to work.[128] When Mithra comes in his chariot, he puts the fiend to flight;[129] the Aryan Glory and the holy spells join hands as well to render powerless this demoness of laziness.[130]

Aeshma

The demon of wrath. This evil genius of wrath and fury, who comes down from the Gathic period, works in opposition to Sraosha. He is full of sin,[131] and is the wielder of a bloody mace.[132] Ahura Mazda created Sraosha to counteract his fiendish mischief.[133] The faithful invoke Sraosha to protect them from his assaults.[134] Sraosha hurls his mace at this demon's skull, and the fiend takes to flight before Mithra.[135] Intoxicating drinks incite men to embrace Aeshma, but the recital of the holy spells helps to dispel him.[136]

Buiti

The tempter of Zarathushtra. The eighteenth chapter of the Vendidad contains an account of the temptation of Zarathushtra by the Evil Spirit. Angra Mainyu decreed in his infernal council amid the bickerings of the demons with one another that Buiti, who is death unseen, should go to the world and lure Zarathushtra from his constancy. The righteous one chants the sacred Ahuna Vairya formula and dispels the demon, who rushes away to report his inability to overpower the holy prophet.[137] Buidhi is the name of a demon found in Vd. 11. 9, 12, which may be a variant reading of Buiti.

Apaosha

The demon of drought. The Yasht dedicated to Tishtrya gives a picturesque account of the battle waged between the

[128] Vd. 18. 16, 24. For general information about the cock among the ancient Iranians, see Jackson, *Proceedings,* AOS. 13. lix-lxi; cf. also Peters, *The Cock,* in JAOS. 33. 377-380.

[129] Yt. 10. 97, 134.

[130] Yt. 18. 2; Vd. 11. 9, 12.

[131] Yt. 10. 97.

[132] Ys. 10. 8; Yt. 11. 15.

[133] Yt. 11. 15.

[134] Ys. 57. 25.

[135] Ys. 57. 10; Yt. 10. 97.

[136] Ys. 10. 8; Yt. 17. 5; Vd. 11. 9.

[137] Vd. 19. 1-3.

angel of rain and the demon of drought. Tishtrya assumes three different forms for ten nights each. For the first ten nights he takes the form of a youth of fifteen years of age, for the second ten nights he moves along in the shape of a golden-horned bull, and the last ten nights in the shape of a beautiful white horse, with golden ears and a golden caparison, seeking libations and offerings, so that he may bestow upon his supplicants oxen, children, and horses.[138] When he proceeds to his work of pouring down water on the earth, he is confronted by the demon Apaosha, who has assumed the form of a dark horse.[139] A severe struggle ensues, lasting for three days and three nights. Apaosha comes off first as the victor in the combat and puts the genius of rain to flight.[140] Tishtrya bemoans his lot and complains before Ahura Mazda that mankind had neglected to sacrifice unto him. If only he were strengthened by their offerings, he would carry with himself on the battlefield the vigour of ten horses, ten camels, ten bulls, ten mountains, and ten rivers.[141] Ahura Mazda, thereupon, offers a sacrifice to the unfortunate angel and gives him the desired strength.[142] Girt with this added power, Tishtrya now boldly marches against his rival, and engages in combat with him, until, to the joy of the waters, and plants, and lands, and fields, Tishtrya comes out triumphant and Apaosha is defeated.[143] The Aryan Glory also overpowers him.[144]

Spenjhaghri

Apaosha's associate. The name of this demon occurs but once in the Avesta, in Vd. 19. 40, where Vazishta, the fire of lightning, is spoken of as smiting Spenjhaghri. We learn from the Pahlavi works that this fiend works in concert with Apaosha to hinder Tishtrya from pouring the rain upon the earth.

Azi

Demon of avarice. On the physical side this demon strives to extinguish the household fire, but he is repelled by Sraosha three times during the night.[145] On the moral side he is the evil

[138] Yt. 8. 13-19.
[139] Yt. 8. 21.
[140] Yt. 8. 22.
[141] Yt. 8. 23, 24.
[142] Yt. 8. 25.
[143] Yt. 8. 26-29.
[144] Yt. 18. 2, 6.
[145] Vd. 18. 19, 21, 22.

genius of avarice.[146] Sacrifices are offered to the waters and trees to enable the faithful to withstand him.[147]

Vayu

A collaborator of Astovidhotu. We have already seen the good part of Vayu personified as a Yazata. The other part belongs to the realm of wickedness and is impersonated by a demon of the same name. He accompanies the demon Astovidhotu in his work of bringing death unto creation. He is most pitiless and his path is most dreadful. A man may be able to traverse a path that is barred by a flowing river, or a huge serpent, or by a terrible bear, or by an army, but no man can ever cross the path of Vayu and come out safe.[148] It is Vayu who hastens his victim to speedy death by smothering him when he is drowned or thrown in a burning fire.[149] As the good Vayu and the good wind, Vata, are identical, so are also the evil Vayu and the devil Vata personifying the storm-wind.[150]

Minor Demons

Some of the other demons who are merely mentioned by name, and about whose characteristics we do not know anything, are Vyambura, Hashi, Ghashi, Saeni, Buji, Driwi, Daiwi, Kaswi, Akatasha, Aghashi, Paitisha, Zaurva, Ithyejah, and Spazga.

Pairika

The fairies. A class of bewitching fairies has been created by Angra Mainyu to seduce men from the right path and injure the living world. Nimble as birds they go along flying in the shape of shooting stars between the earth and the heavens.[151] They come upon fire, water, trees, and other creations from which they are to be driven away by the recital of spells.[152] They try to kill Zarathushtra, but in vain.[153]

Three of the more prominent fairies are mentioned by name. They are Khnanthaiti that clave unto King Keresaspa, who was bewitched by her looks;[154] Duzhyairya,[155] corresponding to

[146] Yt. 18. 1.
[147] Ys. 16. 8.
[148] Aog. 77-81.
[149] Vd. 5. 8, 9.
[150] Vd. 10. 14.
[151] Yt. 8. 8.
[152] Vd. 11. 9, 12.
[153] Yt. 8. 44.
[154] Vd. 1. 10.
[155] Yt. 8. 51, 53, 54.

Dushiyar, or the fairy of drought according to the Old Persian Inscriptions,[156] and to Dushyari of the Turfan manuscript of Mani;[157] and Mush.[158] Zarathushtra tells Angra Mainyu he will smite Khnanthaiti.[159] Ahura created Tishtrya to rout Duzhyairya.[160] He keeps her in bonds as a thousand men would keep one man, and if Tishtrya were not to keep her in check she would extinguish the life of the entire material world.[161]

The recital of the Ahuna Vairya and Airyaman Ishya prayers rout the fairies.[162] Zarathushtra asks Ahura Mazda to declare that divine name of his by the utterance of which he may smite the demons and fairies.[163] Ahura Mazda, thereupon, declares that the recital of his holy names is most efficacious for routing the evil ones.[164] Haurvatat, Haoma, Ardvi Sura, Tishtrya, Mithra, Vayu, the Fravashis, sun, waters, and trees are invoked to give power to withstand the seductive attacks of the Pairikas.[165] Haoshyangha and Takhma Urupi overpowered and ruled over them.[166]

The Yatus, or sorcerers, usually associate with this class of evil beings. The West has derived the term magic from Magi, the priestly class of the ancient Persians. The Zoroastrian works of all periods, however, detest sorcery as an evil creation of Angra Mainyu.[167] The verdict of the Greek writers regarding this is unanimous. Dino states in his *Persica* that the Magi abhorred divination by magic, and Sotion on the authority of Aristotle and Dino says that sorcery was unknown among the Magi.[168]

[156] Darius, Pers. d. 3.
[157] Müller, *Handschriften-Reste*, 2, p. 15, in Abh. d. kgl. Preuss. Akad. d. Wiss., Anhang, Berlin, 1904.
[158] Ys. 16. 8.
[159] Vd. 19. 5.
[160] Yt. 8. 36, 51, 53-55.
[161] Yt. 8. 54, 55.
[162] Yt. 3. 5; 11. 6; Vd. 20. 12.
[163] Yt. 1. 6.
[164] Yt. 1. 10, 11.
[165] Ys. 9. 18; 16. 8; 68. 8; Yt. 4. 4; 5. 26; 6. 4; 10. 34; 13. 104, 135; 15. 12; Sr. 2. 13.
[166] Yt. 19. 26, 28, 29.
[167] Vd. 1. 14, 15.
[168] Frag. 5, FHG. 2. 90; Diogenes Laertius, Proaem. 8; cf. also Windischmann in Sanjana's *Zarathushtra in the Gathas and in the Greek and Roman Classics*, pp. 88, 105.

CHAPTER XIX

DEATH AND BEYOND

The mightiest of men cower before death. Every creature that is born in this earth dies when the demon of death comes to it.[1] The soul is immortal, and survives the death of the body which is perishable.[2] The ignorant man, intoxicated with the pride of youth, encircled in the heat of passion, and enchained by the bonds of fleeting desires, forgets the transitoriness and death of the body.[3] One who lives for the body alone comes to sorrow at the end of life, and finds his soul thrown into the terrible den of Angra Mainyu.[4] Man should act in such a way that his soul may attain to heaven after death.[5] The individual who blindly seeks the passing good of the body, thus sacrificing the lasting good of the soul, is merciless to himself, and if he has no mercy on himself, he cannot expect it from others.[6] This ignorance brings his spiritual ruin.[7] He should not live in forgetfulness of everlasting life, and lose it by yielding to his passions. Man sees his fellow-beings snatched away from this earth, but he grows so indifferent that he forgets that his own turn may soon come to sever his connection with this world.[8] The man may be faring sumptuously in the forenoon, but his fall may come in the afternoon.[9] The demon of death overpowers every one. Ever since the world began, and man graced this earth with his presence, no mortal has ever escaped his clutches, nor shall one ever escape until the resurrection.[10] The priests and the princes, the righteous and the wicked, have all to tread the dreary path of death.[11] Neither the first man, Gaya Maretan, who kept the world free from disease and death, nor Haoshyangha, who killed two-thirds of the demons, nor Takhma Urupi, who bridled and rode on the Evil Spirit, nor Yima, who dispelled

[1] Aog. 40.
[2] Aog. 5-7, 25-28.
[3] *Ib.* 31-37.
[4] *Ib.* 28, 38.
[5] *Ib.* 20.
[6] *Ib.* 49.
[7] *Ib.* 56.
[8] *Ib.* 39.
[9] *Ib.* 53-55.
[10] *Ib.* 57, 58, 69.
[11] *Ib.* 59.

old age and death from his kingdom, nor Dahaka, who was a scourge to humanity, nor Thraetaona, who bound Dahaka, nor Kavi Usa, who flew in the sky, nor Franrasyan, who hid himself under the earth, could struggle successfully against death. All these great and mighty men delivered up their bodies, when Astovidhotu grasped them by their hands.[12]

The recital of the sacred formulas on the deathbed of man helps his soul when it leaves the tenement of the body. Bodily death liberates the soul for a higher life. This period of the separation of the body and soul is momentous; it is full of fear and distress.[13] In its utter bewilderment the soul seeks help. The recital of a single Ashem Vohu, pronounced by a man at the last moments of his life, is worth the entire zone inhabited by man,[14] and does him incalculable good.

From this world to that which is beyond. The twofold Gathic division of the universe into the *astvant,* 'corporeal,' and *manahya,* 'spiritual,' is maintained throughout all the Younger Avestan texts. One frequently meets with the expressions, 'both the worlds,' 'this and the next world,' 'this world which is corporeal, and the next which is spiritual,' 'the perishable and the imperishable,' and the like. Man stands on the borderland between the material and spiritual worlds. In the world of the living he lives a short span of life. Here he either works for the realization of the great ideals that Ahura Mazda has set up for him, and triumphs; or he falls away from them, and fails. In the world of the dead, Ahura Mazda rewards man for having kept his commands, but visits with retribution all those that have disregarded his bidding.

Heaven and hell are in the Younger Avesta no longer conditions of man's being, as they were in the Gathas, but are actual places located in space. The process reaches its consummation in the Pahlavi works, but the beginning is already made.

All souls dwell three nights on earth after death. At the dissolution of the body, the soul is freed from its bodily prison. The journey towards the next world does not, however, begin immediately after death, for the separation of the soul from the body takes place by slow degrees. It requires full three days and nights before the last vestige of the earthly bondage perishes. During this period the soul stays on earth and recounts the acts

[12] *Ib.* 60-68, 85-102. [13] Yt. 22. 17. [14] Yt. 21. 14, 15.

done during its life. It takes its seat near the spot where the head of the deceased rested before the corpse was removed to the Tower of Silence. If the soul has walked in the Path of Righteousness during life, it spends its time in chanting the sacred hymns, and experiences as much joy as the whole of the living world can experience collectively.[15] It is anxiously longing for the rewards which are to take place at the end of the third night after death.[16]

Precisely the reverse is the case if the dead one happens to be wicked. The soul of such a one sits near the skull and clamours in bewilderment and confusion about the terrible lot that awaits it, and experiences as much suffering as the whole of the living world can experience collectively.[17]

Daena accompanies the soul to the next world. Of the various spiritual faculties of man, the daena is the only one besides the soul of which we hear anything after the dissolution of the body. On the dawn of the fourth day after death, the romantic journey of the soul begins and its voyage into the hereafter is described in allegorical and picturesque words. The soul of the righteous one makes its triumphal ascent to heaven, wending its way among fragrant perfumes, and amid a wind that blows from the regions of the south, a sweet-scented wind, sweeter-scented by far than any which the soul ever inhaled on earth.[18] There appears then to the soul its own daena, or religious conscience in the shape of a damsel of unsurpassed beauty, the fairest of the fair in the world.[19] Dazzled by her matchless beauty and grandeur, the soul halts and inquires who this image may be, the like of which it had neither seen nor heard tell of in the material world. The apparition replies that she is the impersonation of the soul's own good thoughts, good words, and good deeds in life. She is nothing more than the true reflex of its own character. For, when his friends and neighbours in the corporeal world indulged in wickedness, the spirit abiding in the true believer always embraced good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. It was this righteousness of the soul that had made the daena so lovely and so fair.[20]

This is a piece of an allegorical soliloquy on the part of the

[15] Yt. 22. 1-6; 24. 54. [16] Vd. 19. 27-29. [17] Yt. 22. 19-24. [18] Yt. 22. 7, 8; 24. 55. [19] Yt. 22. 9; 24. 56. [20] Yt. 22. 10-14; 24. 57-60.

soul, in which the consciousness of its having led a virtuous life on earth brings it inner joy in the future, and that sweet voice of conscience comforts. In its flight to heaven which proves to be an eternal comfort, such a soul, redeemed by its piety on earth, is helped by Sraosha, Rashnu, the good Vayu, Arshtat, Mithra, and the Fravashis of the righteous in its advance to the realms of final beatitude.[21]

On the other hand, the soul of the wicked person is harassed by the thought of its wicked life, and marches at the end of the third night on the dreary and dreadful path that lies amid the most foul-scented wind blowing from the northern regions.[22] The full Avestan text is missing here, but we gather from the similar account of the wicked soul's journey preserved in the Pahlavi scriptures that the soul of the sinner is confronted by the personification of its own conscience in the shape of an ugly old woman who mercilessly taunts it for the wicked life it has led.

All souls have to make their way across the Chinvat Bridge into heaven or hell. The righteous as well as the wicked souls must needs go to this Bridge of Judgment, made by Mazda, before they can be admitted to the realm of the hereafter.[23] Dogs are stationed at the bridge to guard its transit.[24] These hounds of the spirit realm help the pious souls to cross the bridge, but the wicked ones long in vain for their aid. The dogs accompany the daena of a good soul.[25] Whoso in the fulness of faith recites the sacred Ahuna Vairya is enabled by Ahura Mazda to cross the Chinvat Bridge and to reach paradise in a threefold manner, namely, unto the best existence, the best righteousness, and the best lights.[26] Ahura Mazda proclaims to Zarathushtra certain rules of righteousness by the practice of which he could pass over the bridge to paradise.[27] Speaking about the qualifications of a priest, the Heavenly Father informs the prophet that he shall be called a priest who by his wise precepts teaches a man

[21] Aog. 8.
[22] Yt. 22. 25.
[23] Vd. 19. 29, 36; Sr. 1. 30; 2. 30.
[24] Vd. 13. 9; cf. Kuka, *The Dog in the Vendidad*, in *Zartoshti*, vol. 1, pp. 271-280, Bombay, 1903; Bloomfield, *Cerberus, the Dog of Hades*, pp. 27-30, Chicago, 1905.
[25] Vd. 19. 30.
[26] Ys. 19. 6.
[27] Ys. 71. 16.

to be of easy conscience at the bridge.[28] In this same connection it may be added that the man who has ill-treated the Vanghapara class of dogs in this world finds not his way across this crucial bridge.[29] Besides the bare announcement that the righteous souls can cross the bridge successfully, and that the wicked ones fail so to do,[30] we are not furnished with a detailed description of the judgment at the bridge, although we have this information explicitly recorded in the Pahlavi accounts of the fate of the soul after death.

Heaven

Four heavens. In contrast to the single heaven referred to in the Gathas, we meet with a fourfold division of heaven in the Avestan period. Garonmana, or the Abode of Praise, remains the highest heaven, the realm of bliss that is reached by traversing the three lower heavens, called Humata, or Good Thought, Hukhta, or Good Words, and Hvarshta, or Good Deeds, as beatific abodes for the soul. Garonmana, the fourth and the highest heaven, is frequently designated in the Younger Avesta as the place of *anaghra raochah,* or endless light.[31] The generic name, however, for all the four heavens is *vahishta ahu,* or Best Existence. This heavenly region is the shining and all-happy abode of the righteous,[32] and in Garonmana dwell Ahura Mazda and his heavenly retinue, together with those human souls that have reached perfection through righteousness.[33]

A cordial welcome awaits the pious souls in paradise. Vohu Manah, the premier archangel of Mazda, hails the pious souls on their arrival in paradise in congratulatory terms,[34] and he, as a leader of the heavenly host, introduces them to Ahura Mazda and the other heavenly beings.[35] In a different passage Ahura Mazda himself is depicted as welcoming the righteous souls with the same words that Vohu Manah uses.[36] The souls of the righteous persons that have departed from this world in

[28] Vd. 18. 6.
[29] Vd. 13. 3.
[30] Vd. 13. 3; 19. 30.
[31] Yt. 22. 15; 24. 61.
[32] Ys. 11. 10; 62. 6; Vsp. 7. 1; 23. 1; Yt. 12. 36; Sr. 1. 27; 2. 27.
[33] Vd. 19. 32, 36.
[34] Vd. 19. 31.
[35] Aog. 10-13.
[36] Vd. 7. 52.

earlier times join furthermore in welcoming the newcomers in their midst.[37]

The pious enjoy eternally what but few mortals enjoy, and then only for a short period in this world. The bountiful host of paradise commands his heavenly caterer to bring to the souls of the righteous the ambrosia;[38] a later work adds that this celestial food is served to the righteous souls by the Fravashis, while robes embroidered with gold and golden thrones are supplied to them by Vohu Manah.[39] The blessed souls enjoy eternal felicity and incomparable happiness in this abode of endless light.[40] Theirs is the lot to receive the everlasting rest which Mazda has prepared for them, and it is theirs to experience as much joy as one at the zenith of his greatness enjoys in this world.[41]

Misvana Gatu

The intermediary place between heaven and hell. We have already referred to the probability of the idea of the intermediary place between heaven and hell as embodied in the Gathas. The Younger Avestan texts four times mention a place called *misvāna gātu,* 'the place of mixing.'[42] It is invoked by name along with Garonmana, the highest paradise, and the Chinvat Bridge. The texts in question, however, do not give us any account of this place. The Later Pahlavi texts render *misvāna gātu* by *hameshak sut gās,* or 'the place of eternal weal,' which is generally taken to be identical with the well-known hamistakan of the Pahlavi period.

Hell

Four hells. Simultaneously with the increase in the number of heavens, there is a corresponding increase in the list of hells. The Gathas knew but one hell. The Later Avestan texts speak of four abodes of the damned. They are those of Dushmata, or Evil Thought, Dushhukhta, or Evil Word, and Dushhvarshta, or Evil Deed, together with the fourth and lowest hell, which has no specific name of its own in the Avesta, but stands in juxtaposition to the highest Garonmana, and receives the epithet

[37] Yt. 22. 16.
[38] Yt. 22. 18.
[39] Aog. 15-17.
[40] TdFr. 82, 83.
[41] Aog. 14.
[42] Yt. 1. 1; Sr. 1. 30; 2. 30; Vd. 19. 36.

anaghra temah, or Endless Darkness.[43] The wicked soul reaches this darkest abode with the fourth stride. The realm known as *dush ahu,* or Evil Existence,[44] or again as *achishta anghhu,* or Worst Existence, are designations of hell in general.[45] The regions of hell, if we look to incidental allusions in the Avesta, are stinking,[46] dreadful, and dark.[47]

The wicked souls reap in incessant tears the crop they have sown in the finite world. Angra Mainyu orders the wicked souls to be fed with the foulest and the most poisonous food in hell.[48] It is their own evil doings that bring them to woe.[49] They enter hell terror-stricken, like unto the sheep that trembles before a wolf.[50] A life of sorrow and suffering now awaits them.[51] The Evil Spirit exposes the wretched souls to the mockery of the infernal rabble.

[43] Yt. 22. 33.
[44] Yt. 19. 44; Vd. 19. 47.
[45] Ys. 71. 15; Vd. 5. 62; 7. 22; WFr. 3. 2.
[46] Vd. 19. 47; TdFr. 93.
[47] Aog. 28.
[48] Yt. 22. 35, 36.
[49] Vd. 5. 62; 7. 22.
[50] Vd. 13. 8.
[51] TdFr. 84.

CHAPTER XX

THE RENOVATION

The greatest of the renovators. Zoroaster in his religion postulated a renovation of the universe, a new dispensation in which the world will become perfect at the last day. We learn from Diogenes, on the authority of Theopompus and Eudemus, that the classical authors were familiar with the Magian doctrine of the millennium and the final restoration of the world as early as in the fourth century B.C.[1] Plutarch draws his materials on this millennial doctrine from Theopompus.[2] In the Later Avestan texts we sometimes miss a clear definition of the collective judgment of the souls and final regeneration. But they furnish us with some stray passages which cursorily deal with the work of the Renovation at the millennium and of the saviour-renovators who will bring this to pass.

The world progresses towards perfection. Iniquity and wrong are to be ultimately supplanted by equity and right. The world is to be restored to a veritable heaven on earth. The goodness of Ahura Mazda makes it imperative that the entire creation shall finally be saved. The faithful are confident of this final event, and they know that this accomplishment will be the end of the world, when right shall triumph supreme. In his daily prayers the true believer prays that the fire that burns in his house may remain shining till the day of the good Renovation.[3] Spenta Armaiti, the genius of earth, is likewise implored to receive and to rear the seed that men emit in their dreams, and ultimately to deliver them back as holy men at the time of Renovation.[4]

The texts speak of certain great souls, three in number, including the saviour paramount, that will usher in this period. These are called the Saoshyants in the Zoroastrian terminology.

[1] Proaem. 9.
[2] Is. et Os. 47.
[3] Ys. 62. 3; Ny. 5. 9.
[4] Vd. 18. 51.

The Fravardin Yasht [5] mentions the chief renovators who will prepare the way for the last saviour. Zarathushtra's own kith and kin, a superman of miraculous powers, born in supernatural manner, will finally descend upon earth to renovate the world. Astvatereta, or the Saoshyant proper, will be immaculately conceived through a virgin called Vispataurvi, or 'the all-triumphant.' [6] This Saoshyant par excellence is the most eminent restorer, he is called the friend of Ahura Mazda, the meritorious one, who will bring the mighty work to completion. This particular Yasht,[7] as just stated, incidentally mentions Zarathushtra's seed as watched over by ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine Fravashis. Passages such as these in the Avesta contain in embryo the doctrine of the immaculate birth which is later elaborated by the Pahlavists.

This final Saoshyant will be helped in his great undertaking by pious comrades or attendants, who will be, as the description says, fiend-smiting, of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, and who are such as have never known falsehood.[8] The Kingly Glory will cleave unto them,[9] and the great Saoshyant will profit the whole bodily world and withstand the Druj.[10]

The final reconciliation of the entire creation to its creator. The world will henceforth neither grow old nor die, decay nor rot, but will be ever fresh and ever living; death will be no more, life and immortality will come to pass forever and the dead will rise up again.[11] Plutarch records that it is the Magian belief that at the time of the Renovation mankind will speak one language and have one commonwealth; men will live without food and they will not cast shadows.[12] Vohu Manah at the time of this final dispensation will smite Aka Manah; Truth will rout Falsehood; Haurvatat and Ameretat will smite once and for all the fiends of hunger and thirst, at which moment the deadly Aeshma will bow and flee helpless forever.[13] The demons are believed to have existed as long as physical and moral imperfections lasted; with the cessation of all such evils, the fiends will be no more. The Saoshyants will join in reciting the Airyaman Ishya prayer, and the divine Kingdom of Ahura

[5] Yt. 13. 128.
[6] Yt. 13. 142; 19. 92; Vd. 19. 5.
[7] Yt. 13. 62.
[8] Yt. 19. 95.
[9] Yt. 19. 89.
[10] Yt. 13. 129.
[11] Yt. 19. 11, 12, 19, 20, 23, 24, 89, 90; WFr. 4. 3.
[12] Is. et Os. 47.
[13] Yt. 19. 95, 96.

Mazda will come to pass, as the sovereignty of Angra Mainyu will then end. Impotent, the Prince of Evil will acknowledge his defeat in the warfare that has gone on for ages between the power of Right and of Wrong. Bowing before Ahura Mazda, Angra Mainyu will hide himself with the demons in the earth.[14] Evil will forthwith vanish, and with it will disappear all evil propensities in man. With the disappearance of evil from the universe, good will prevail everywhere and for all time; and the accursed name of Angra Mainyu will be forgotten. Ahura Mazda will be forever, even as he has been from all eternity.

[14] Yt. 19. 96; WFr. 4. 2, 3.

CHAPTER XXI

ZOROASTRIANISM UNDER THE FOREIGN YOKE

Alexander consigns the Zoroastrian scriptures to the flames. Cyrus had made Persia the queen of Asia, and it was in Persia that East and West first met. The history of the Achaemenians was a long struggle of wars with nations, and a considerable part of this warfare was a conflict with the West. Alexander crushed the Iranian armies at Arbela, and wrested the sceptre from the hands of Darius III, in 330 B.C., and the structure of the Iranian empire was shattered to pieces. Great as was this national catastrophe, still greater was the spiritual loss involved in the destruction of the holy scriptures of Zoroastrianism, which perished in the conflagration of Persepolis when the great conqueror, in a fit of drunkenness, delivered the palaces of the Achaemenians to the flames.[1] Fire, the most sacred emblem of Iran, was wantonly utilized in consuming the Word of Ormazd. The ill-fated Darius had ordered the two archetype copies to be preserved in the Dizh-i Nipisht and Ganj-i Shapigan.[2] The first, deposited in the archives of Persepolis, perished in the conflagration. The second copy of the sacred writings, in the Ganj-i Shapigan, we are informed, was done into Greek,[3] though more probably it met with a similar fate. Ahriman had sent Zohak and Afrasiab as the scourges to Iran, but their ravages paled before the irrevocable harm done by this fact of Alexander's wanton vandalism. Literary Iran has known him as her arch-enemy, and the Pahlavi writers have branded him 'accursed,' 'evil-destined,' and an envoy of Ahriman. After a long period of darkness, following his ill-destined invasion of Persia, Iran once more recovered her political autonomy, but she never regained, in their pristine fulness, the holy works of her great Prophet.

[1] Diodorus, 17. 72; Curtius, 5. 7; Dk., vol. 9, p. 569.
[2] Dk., vol. 9, p. 577.
[3] Dk., vol. 9, p. 569.

Zoroastrianism thrives better under the Parthians than under the Seleucids. The premature death of the great conqueror brought an end of his ambition of hellenizing Persia. The Philhellenic princes that ruled over the destinies of Persia for the long period of five and a half centuries that intervened between the overthrow of the Achaemenians and the rise of the Sasanians failed to accomplish anything in that imperialistic direction. Disintegration followed almost immediately after Alexander's death, under the Seleucid satrapies, and less than a century had elapsed before Arsaces succeeded in founding a strong empire in Parthia about 250 B.C. We have no means to ascertain the undercurrents of religious thought among the Zoroastrians during this period. From what little information we get we find that in the Parthians Zoroastrianism found better masters than in the Seleucids. Mithradates, Tiridates, Rhodaspes, and Artabanus are some of the names of the Parthian kings that savour of a partiality for Zoroastrianism. The Magi exercised a considerable influence at the Parthian court. They had their place in the council of the state.[4] Pliny informs us that Tiridates, the brother of Vologeses I, was initiated in the mysteries of the Magi.[5] We have on the authority of Tacitus that he was a priest.[6]

Zoroastrian practices embraced by the Parthians. In the early days of their empire, at least, the Parthians were strongly influenced by Zoroastrianism in their religious beliefs. They venerated the sacred elements, especially the fire, worshipped the sun under the name of Mithra, and in accordance with the tenets of Zoroastrianism, exposed dead bodies to the light of the sun and the birds of prey.[7] The fire altar, emblematic of Iranian influence, is a common feature on the reverse side of the coins of the Parthian rulers. Tiridates betrays an exaggerated notion of the Zoroastrian injunctions for the purity of the elements, when, invited by Nero to receive the crown of Armenia, he avoided the sea route and went to Rome by land. Prompted by the same scruples against defiling water, his royal brother declined to go to Rome, and invited his Roman contemporary to Persia.[8] One of the five kings of this royal house that bore the name Vologeses,

[4] Strabo, p. 515.
[5] Nat. Hist. 30. 6.
[6] Annales, 15. 24.
[7] Cf. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 399, 400, London, 1873.
[8] Dio Cassius, 63. 1-7.

ordered a collection to be made of the scattered fragments of the manuscript material that might have survived the period that for nearly five centuries threatened the utter destruction of the sacred scriptures of Zoroaster's faith and menaced even that which was preserved in oral tradition. Nevertheless, Dinkart informs us that all that could be recovered of the lost Zoroastrian canon at this time was only as much as could be retained by any one Dastur in his memory.[9-13]

Classical references to Zoroastrianism during this period. Our knowledge about the state of Zoroastrianism during this period is very scanty, and the occasional references made by the classical writers of this time to the religious practices of the Zoroastrians help us in gaining some more information on the religious history of the faith. We have often referred in earlier pages to the works of Strabo and Diogenes Laertius, who draw their material from the early Greek writers as well as base their statements on their personal investigation. We gather some more particulars on the subject from the incidental references of other writers. Porphyry [14] mentions on the authority of Eubulus that the Magi are divided into three classes, the first and the most learned of which neither kill nor eat anything living.[15] Diogenes Laertius states that vegetables, cheese, and bread form their food, and they content themselves with the plain ground for their bed.[16] Clement of Alexandria [17] mentions a sect of the Magi that observed the life of celibacy.[18] Speaking about the designation by which the Zoroastrian priests were known in Cappadocia in his days, Strabo relates that in addition to their usual name of the Magi, the priests were called *puraithoi*, the equivalent of the Avestan designation athravan, or fire-priest.[19]

Zoroastrianism spreads its influence abroad. The Magi had established themselves during the Parthian period in large numbers in eastern Asia Minor, Galatia, Phrygia, Lydia, and even in Egypt. These colonies of the Zoroastrian priests became an active source of the diffusion of the Zoroastrian beliefs.[20] Strabo

[9-13] SBE., vol. 37, bk. 8. 1. 21, pp. 9, 10.
[14] A.D. 233-306.
[15] De Abstinentia, 4. 16.
[16] Proaem. 7.
[17] A.D. first century.
[18] Stromata, 3, p. 191.
[19] Strabo, p. 733.
[20] Cumont, *The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism*, p. 139, Chicago, 1911.

informs us that the Zoroastrian divinities were worshipped in Armenia, Cappadocia, and throughout Northeastern Asia Minor.[21] He mentions having seen in Cappadocia the image of Omanus, that is, Vohu Manah carried in a procession.[22] The people of Pontus remained partially attached to Zoroastrianism up to the first century, when they exchanged the faith of Zoroaster with that of Jesus. Pausanias,[23] refers to the Magian rites practised in Lydia in the second century.[24]

Of all the Zoroastrian Yazatas, Mithra attained to the greatest prominence during this period. The Avestan texts constantly speak of Mithra as the lord of wide pastures, and Mithra gathered the largest number of flocks under his protection in the field of spirit. Zoroastrian in its basic principles, Mithra's cult was soon surcharged with Semitic accretions and spread far and wide under this new syncretic form. We have already seen from the activities of Mithra as described in the Avestan works that besides being a divinity of light and truth, he was also the tutelary divinity of the fighting armies. This warlike trait of Mithra even appealed strongly to the martial instincts of the Roman armies that poured forth into the Parthian regions. Mithra's cult was introduced in the West by these soldiers, and his votaries existed in Rome under Pompey in 67 B.C. The Iranian divinity rapidly conquered vast dominions for his cult in Europe, and brought a large multitude of votaries from distant lands to his feet. Mithra was officially recognized in 307 A.D. by Diocletian as the protector of his empire, and Mithraism proved a formidable foe of Christianity until the end of the fourth century.

In the near east Mithra's cult had spread in the different parts of Asia Minor during this period, and reached India in the third century, where it had its root in the North Western provinces and Gujarat.[25]

Antiochus I, king of Commagene on the Euphrates in his epitaph (about 35 B.C.) pays homage to Ahura Mazda, Mithra, and Verethraghna.[25a]

[21] Pp. 512, 732, 733.
[22] P. 732.
[23] Second century A.D.
[24] 5. 27. 5.
[25] Bhandarkar, *Vaisnavism, S'aivism, and Minor Religious Systems* in *Grundriss der Indo-Arischen Philologie*, 3. 6, pp. 153-157, Strassburg, 1913.
[25a] Dittenberger, *Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae*, vol. 1, p. 598. Lipsiae, 1903-1905.

The appearance of the Zoroastrian angels Atar, Maongha, Tishtrya, Mithra, Verethraghna, Vata, and others on the coins of the Indo-Scythian kings from the time of Kanishka, in the second century, proves the strong Zoroastrian influence outside Iran.[26]

Zoroastrianism at the close of the Parthian empire. The fact that some of the Parthian kings were favourably inclined to Zoroastrianism did not succeed in saving the Zoroastrian Church from falling into decay. Heresies and scepticism were rampant, it seems, and the priesthood was steeped in ignorance.[27] The language of the Avesta had long ceased to be a living tongue, and the knowledge of the holy books written in that language was on its decline. Five centuries of literary chaos thus elapsed before the dawn of the real Zoroastrian reformation dispelled the darkness and once more illumined the Mazdayasnian world with new light.

[26] Cf. Stein, *Zoroastrian Deities on Indo-Scythian Coins,* in Indian Antiquary, vol. 17, pp. 89-98.
[27] AV. I. 13-15.

THE PAHLAVI PERIOD

FROM THE THIRD TO THE NINTH CENTURY

CHAPTER XXII

ZOROASTRIANISM AS TAUGHT BY THE PAHLAVI WORKS

Ardashir, a Magus, rejuvenates Zoroastrianism. With the fall of the Achaemenian empire were extinguished the last sparks of the fire of racial jealousy between the Medes and Persians. Common hardships and common sorrows had obliterated all traces of bitter feeling for one another. The Seleucid period and the five centuries of Parthian rule, as another great empire in Iran, served all the more to make them now one compact homogeneous people, thinking with one mind, feeling with one heart, and acting with one aim. As already pointed out, the Magi did not receive recognition in the Avesta. It is not so in the Pahlavi period. The Avestan term athravan remains during this era as a class designation alone, but magopat, which later becomes mobad, is used throughout the Pahlavi literature, equally as a class designation for priesthood and as a personal title of a priest to distinguish him from a layman. Significant in this light becomes the fact that although the Persians of old had defeated the Medes and their sacerdotal caste, the Magi, it was now a Magus again that was destined to revive the national glory of Iran, and restore their ancient faith. The Kingly Glory of Iran clave to a hero of the house of Sasan in the province of Fars, who was alike priest and king.[1] Ardashir was his name, and the Iranian world rang with the praises of this son of Babak, whose fame is writ large in the history of Zoroastrianism.

This founder of the Sasanian dynasty won his spurs in the battle against Ardavan, the last of the Parthian kings, in A.D. 224. People turned their eager eyes to him for the national emancipation from the heavy yoke of the foreigners. His was the task of rebuilding the shattered fragments of the ancient Persian empire upon the ruins of the Parthian empire. When he succeeded in consolidating the various states of Iran into one mighty

[1] Agathias, 2. 26.

commonwealth under his sceptre, he proceeded vigorously thereupon to establish a polity in conformity with the teachings of Zoroaster which would unite his empire as Church and State. It was through Ardashir that Zoroastrianism became once more enthroned as the creed paramount, after a lapse of fully five centuries and remained so for four centuries under the House of Sasan. The king himself, being of sacerdotal caste, strongly upheld the doctrine of the unity of the Church and the State. The two, he said, are like brother and sister; neither can flourish without the other.[2] They both are interwoven together like two pieces of brocade.[3] The Dinkart, which is the greatest of the Pahlavi works of this period, upholds the divine right of kings and states that if the temporal power of the glorious king Jamshid had been blended with the spiritual power of the supreme priest Zoroaster, the Evil Spirit would have lain low long ere this, and the Kingdom of Righteousness would have been established on earth once and forever.[4] Both of these powers will be concentrated in the final saviour, who is to enable man to gain the final victory over the Kingdom of Wickedness.[5]

Ardashir, as a pontiff-king himself, commissioned his high-priest Tansar to collect the scattered Avestan works and thus to prepare an authorized compilation of the sacred texts.[6] The enthusiasm evoked among the faithful at the restoration of their lost scriptures presents a situation seldom paralleled in history, and certainly never surpassed in the religious development of Zoroastrianism.

The revival of Zoroastrianism continues with unabating zeal. The great work inaugurated by the first of the royal House of Sasan was zealously continued by his descendants and notably by Shapur II,[7-8] who brought the work to completion with the help of his illustrious Dastur and premier Adarbad Mahraspand.[9] Mani's heresy was at its height during this period, and Adarbad strove hard to restore the faith of his people that was undermined by the misguided leader's heretical teachings. In order to prove the marvels of the faith, Adarbad is reported to have submitted himself to the ordeal of the molten metal and to

[2] Masudi, tr. Barbier de Meynard, 2. 162.
[3] Shah-namah, tr. Warner, vol. 6, p. 286.
[4] Dk., vol. 3, pp. 175, 176.
[5] *Ib.*, p. 176.
[6] *Ib.*, vol. 9, p. 578.
[7-8] A.D. 309-379.
[9] Dk., vol. 9, p. 579.

have come out unscathed.[10] King Shapur thereupon declared the work, as thus redacted, to be authoritative, and he commanded that anything outside this canonical collection should not be countenanced. Another source states that still further steps were taken to put the truth of the religion to the test. Several pious mobads were convoked to attend at the temple of the fire Froba, and there to consider the momentous question of deputing one of their number to visit, in a vision, the spiritual world and thus to bring back from the angels themselves a first-hand knowledge of matters spiritual for the complete restoration of the religion. Seven holy men were first elected from the assembly. Out of this number Arda Viraf was selected as the most righteous and saintly. After preliminary ceremonies this holy man entered into a trance for seven days and nights, during which he was transported in spirit to the other world. His soul ascended into the realm of heaven, traversed the spiritual regions, and after beholding paradise visited likewise the inferno. Viraf described the experience of his visions and thus contributed to rehabilitating the faith of the people in their historic religion.

The Pahlavi works are written by many hands in successive periods. Though the canon was declared closed by the edict of Shapur II, the work of rendering the Avestan texts into Pahlavi with exegetic commentaries, and the composition of original works in the court language, continued throughout the Sasanian period, and even long after the downfall of the empire. Few if any of the exegetical works on Zoroastrianism written during the Sasanian period have survived the devastating hands of the conquering hordes of the Arabs, and almost all of the important Pahlavi works that we possess to-day were written under the Abbasid Caliphs. The Persians in whose veins flowed the kingly blue blood had helped the Abbasids in overthrowing the Umayyads, thus avenging themselves upon their national foes, the Arabs. This greatly elevated the position of the Zoroastrians at the royal court of Bagdad. During this period it was that the composition of the Pahlavi treatises was undertaken with renewed vigour. To the ninth century we owe much of the Pahlavi literature that has come down to us. Thus the Pahlavi literature covers a period of about seven centuries, beginning from the

[10] SIS. 15. 16; Sg. 10. 70; Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 5. 3, pp. 74. 75; AV. 1. 16.

first Sasanian ruler, Ardashir, or still earlier, and stretching downwards to the times of the illustrious Caliph of the Abbasid dynasty, al-Ma'mun, or even later. The invention of the modern Persian alphabet restricted the use of Pahlavi to the learned clerics, who continued to make some slight additions to the Pahlavi literature up to the end of the eleventh century.[11]

The Pahlavi literature has its roots in the Avestan soil. The Pahlavi works allege that the Avestan Nasks had perished, but the tradition transmitted orally from father to son and the fragments of the sacred texts did not suffer the Avestan lore to die out entirely. The extant Pahlavi works contain quotations from Avestan works that have not come down to us, and this may help to show that the later writers either quoted from memory or that they had access to Avestan works, since lost, when they wrote their Pahlavi treatises; or possibly it may serve to prove both facts. Nay, some of the Pahlavi works seem to be wholly or in part reproductions of some of the Avesta Nasks, and most scholars agree with West that the Pahlavi Bundahishn is an epitome of the Avestan Damdad Nask, that has since disappeared.[12] This leads us to the probable conclusion that besides the two archetype copies deposited in the royal treasuries at Persepolis and Samarkand, there may have existed other copies of these Nasks, in full or in part, in private possession or in the more notable fire-temples. The internal evidence of some of the most important Pahlavi works show us that they preserve much of the material derived from Avestan sources, which still existed in their days, but have been subsequently lost, and thus make up for the loss of the original Avestan books to a considerable extent.

The Pahlavi literature is the completion of the Avestan works. The Pahlavi works explain, elaborate, and describe in detail much of what is stated in brief in the original Avestan texts. This is the inestimable value of the Pahlavi literature. A few examples may serve to illustrate this statement.

The Avestan texts frequently mention 'the Time of Long Duration,' a period carved out from eternity as the age for the duration of the present world, but give no idea, as far as the texts have been preserved, as to the length of this mighty aeon.

[11] West, *Pahlavi Literature,* in GIrPh. 2. 80.
[12] SBE., vol. 5. *int.* xxiv.

It is to the Pahlavi books that we have to turn to ascertain the specific duration of this period, for the millennial doctrine is recognized but not described in the Avestan writings that we possess to-day. It is worked out in full detail in the Pahlavi works. We do not find it in the Avestan writings that we possess to-day. This fact might even suggest that the idea originated with the Pahlavists, but such is not the case, for we know from Plutarch that Theopompus, who flourished in the fourth century B.C., or a little before the close of the Avestan period, was well acquainted with this doctrine of the Zoroastrians, and wrote about it in his works.[13]

The Later Avestan texts speak of the future judgment, the rising of the dead, the renovation, but it is the Pahlavi works that acquaint us with the method of the administration of justice in the heavenly tribunal and the final restoration of the universe.

The texts of the Younger Avesta, as noted above, speak of different heavens and hells, but the Pahlavi works locate them, and give a detailed description of the area they cover, the boundaries that divide them from one another, and the conditions that prevail in them.

The trend of the religious thought of the Pahlavi period. We have described the change from the Gathic to the Avestan texts as a retrograde step; the Pahlavi texts are still farther removed from the Gathas. The Gathic ideal lingers and continues to be admired, but it has ceased to influence. It evokes praise from the Pahlavi writers, but fails to inspire them with its abstract tone.

Zoroaster is a historical personage in the Gathas. In the Later Avesta he is surrounded by an aureole, and becomes superhuman; but in the Pahlavi works his personality is enshrouded by miracles, and he is transformed into a myth. The fascination for marvels in religion is an unmistakable sign of the times. Christian bishops, who, as we shall see in the further stage of our inquiry, carried on inveterate disputes with the Zoroastrian clergy in Persia, based the claim of the greatness of their own religion on miracles. Perhaps in consequence the life-story of Zoroaster, as told by the writers of the Pahlavi period, is similarly stamped with the mark of the miraculous. The Gathas and the Younger Avesta speak of the prophet's conferences with

[13] Is. et Os. 47.

the Amshaspands, or archangels, and his communing with them. The Pahlavi texts, as we shall see in the chapter on the Amshaspands, state that they came to the court of King Gushtasp as the envoys of Ormazd, to give proof of the divine calling of the prophet. Moreover, when Zoroaster met Vohuman, he actually saw the body and the face of the archangel, his size, and his garments, and in these celestial conferences with the archangels the prophet was requested by each in turn to command mankind to take due care of the concrete thing under the special charge of each as an Amshaspand and not merely the abstract virtue that each impersonates. Vohuman, for instance, as the genius of good mind, did not emphasize the faithful adherence to good thoughts, but contented himself with reminding the prophet to teach mankind to take care of his cattle. Artavahisht, the genius of Righteousness, gave no command to Zaratusht to exhort men to follow the path of Righteousness, but taught him that the best way of propitiating the heavenly spirit was to propitiate his fire. Similarly the other archangels in these celestial interviews did not hold up as the ideals the virtues over which they preside, but they inculcated due preservation of their respective earthly objects. A Pazand penitential prayer, whose authorship is attributed to Dastur Adarbad Mahraspand, the high-priest and premier of King Shapur,[14] mentions the Amshaspands by name, and exhorts the penitent to atone severally for the sins committed against them. In every case he addresses each archangel in turn and craves forgiveness for any offence that may have been committed by ill-treating the earthly object over which the genius presides. Offences against the abstract virtues which the archangels impersonate are not mentioned in this treatise,[15] and this fact tends decidedly to show that phase of Zoroastrianism in which abstract ideas were gradually losing in importance, and the concrete side of the religion was coming out with greater prominence.

This process of materializing the original abstract concepts reaches its climax in the eschatological notions of this period. The several heavens and hells, as also the bridge of judgment that leads to them, are now completely materialized. All the splendours of a royal court with its golden thrones, rich carpets, and fine cushions are transferred to paradise. On the other

[14] 309-379. A.D. [15] Pt. 8.

hand, all sorts of physical tortures that man's ingenuity can devise prevail in hell.

Fifteen hundred years separated Zoroaster from the Sasanian period, and a thick veil began to hide the pristine truth of his great religion from his followers.

The Sasanian Church became an arbiter of the faith of Zoroaster. It was through the Church that the religious teachings filtered into the populace. During the period of her great influence, when the State was practically under her tutelage, the Church rendered a lasting service by her attempts to reinvigorate the Mazdayasnian faith. She triumphed when she stood for the spirit of the religion of Mazda; but she failed when she descended to rigid formalism, stifled independent inquiry, stigmatized honest doubt as Ahrimanian, and sought to overrule original thinking by dogmatic assertions. Religion defeats its own ends when it degenerates into dogmatic theology. And it was not otherwise in Persia.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE ACTIVE PROPAGANDA OF THE FAITH

The Pahlavi works on proselytism. Zaratusht first preached his new religion to the people of Iran where he was born; but Ormazd has commanded that the excellent religion should be spread among all races of mankind throughout the world.[1] In their commentary on the oft-recurring Avestan formula *fravarāne,* the Pahlavi versionists add an explanatory gloss that every believer undertakes to proclaim the Zoroastrian religion of Ormazd to the entire world. It is said that the act of the highest merit that a non-believer can perform in his life is to renounce his religion and embrace the Mazdayasnian faith.[2] The great Sasanian monarch, Shapur II, zealously worked for the restoration and promulgation of the faith among the unbelievers with the aid of his illustrious Dastur Adarbad.[3] The Dinkart sanctions even the use of force for the conversion of the aliens.[4] A Pahlavi treatise devoted mostly to the Zoroastrian rituals attests the practice of admitting outsiders into the Zoroastrian fold.[5] Another Pahlavi tractate treating of the social and legal practices of the Sasanians lays down that if a Christian slave embraces the faith of his Zoroastrian master, he should be given freedom.[6]

An Armenian account of the Zoroastrian propaganda. Elisaeus, bishop of the Amadunians in the fifth century A.D., in his historical work states that King Yazdagard II and his royal court resorted to both persuasion and force in their attempt to win over the Christians of Armenia to Zoroastrianism.[7] The

[1] Dk., vol. 10, bk. 5. 14, p. 12.
[2] SBE., vol. 18, *Appendix,* p. 415.
[3] Dk., vol. 9, p. 579.
[4] SBE., vol. 37, bk. 8. 26. pp. 88, 89.
[5] *Nirangistān,* ed. Sanjana, folios 16a, 17a, Bombay, 1894.
[6] *Mādigān-i Hazār Dādistān,* ed. Modi, p. 1, Poona, 1901.
[7] *The History of Vartan,* pp. 8, 9, 11, 31, 32, 35, London, 1830.

Christian subjects of the Persian king in Armenia, we are informed, were promised high positions, court distinctions, royal favours, and the remission of the taxes, if they accepted the national faith of Iran. Mihr Narsih, the premier of Yazdagard II,[8] in the proclamation to the Christian population of Armenia that he issued at the royal command, exhorts them to adopt the religion that their sovereign holds, and adds that those that do not acknowledge the Mazdayasnian faith are deaf and blind, and are misled by Ahriman.[9] Elisaeus informs us that this proselytizing movement on the part of the Magi of Sasanian times was not confined to Armenia alone, but it extended further to Georgia, Albania, and various other countries.[10]

Judaism and Christianity penetrate into Persia as the formidable rivals of the national faith. When the Zoroastrian Church was thus engaged in promulgating the faith of Zoroaster outside Persia, her religious supremacy was challenged at home by Judaism, and more aggressively by Christianity. Ardashir had established Zoroastrianism as the state religion of Persia, but there were in the empire colonies of people following other religions. Iran had long ceased to be a religious unit, and the vast number of Jews, Christians, and others of divergent faiths and creeds contributed towards disunion. Referring to the presence of the people professing different religions in his kingdom, King Hormizd IV once remarked that his throne rested on four feet;[11] and troublesome these outside elements certainly proved to the sovereign occupying the throne. A fairly tolerable latitude was conceded to these adherents of the alien faiths, though occasional persecutions of them were not unknown. These non-Zoroastrians frequently occasioned heated polemics in which virulent criticism and derisive terms were exchanged between the Zoroastrian priests on the one side and the prelates of the rival faiths on the other. Iranian society was often convulsed with the storm of controversy. The alien faiths were branded as the promptings of the Evil Spirit, and were declared to be teaching a vile law, opposed to the pure law of Mazda.[12]

[8] A.D. 438-457.
[9] *The History of Vartan*, pp. 11, 12.
[10] *Ib.*, p. 26.
[11] Tabari, tr. Nöldeke, p. 268; Wigram, *History of the Assyrian Church*, p. 214, London, 1910.
[12] SIS. 6. 7.

The religions that most struggled in this manner with the national faith during the Sasanian period were Judaism and Christianity, whose position in Persia we shall now discuss.

Judaism in Persia. Judea had come under the Persian rule at a very early period. The Babylonian exile brought the Jews into close touch with the Persians in the sixth century B.C. We have already referred to the fact that the restoration of the temple at Jerusalem was executed at the royal command of the Persian kings Cyrus and Darius. The Jews had settled in Persia in large numbers from very early times, and had planted their colonies all over the country. They thrived peacefully and were given privileges to manage their own civic affairs without molestation from the state. Some of the members of the royal house had even married Jewish princesses. King Yazdagard I, for example, had a Jewish consort.[13] But in general those who contracted matrimonial alliance with Jewish women were disliked, and the Dinkart inveighs in strong terms against the practice of contracting such unions.[14] In the course of time, the Persians and the Israelites seem to have been sharply divided in religious matters. Disputations on questions of belief must have been frequent. All of the Pahlavi works denounce Judaism in unsparing terms. The writer of the Dinkart, for instance, avers that Judaism is not a divine religion,[15] and points to Zohak, the most detested of men, as the originator of the Jewish scriptures,[16] branding elsewhere the Jewish books as utterances of the demons.[17] Seno, a Zoroastrian sage, is reported to have said, in his admonitions to the kings of Persia, that the sovereign of the people ought to keep aloof from the religion of the Jews, as bringing devastation to the world.[18] The progress of the Jewish belief should be arrested, lest it spread its evil among the faithful.[19] The knowledge of this religion produces baneful influences upon the Mazdayasnians,[20] it implants vice,[21] and aggravates immorality.[22] Men become of evil disposition through it.[23] Those who belong to this faith cannot be said to be related to the Prime Source.[24] Such violent attacks on the beliefs of a race

[13] Shatroihā-i Airan, 47, 53.
[14] Dk., vol. 2, pp. 97-102.
[15] Dk., vol. 4, p. 211.
[16] Dk., vol. 6, pp. 372, 373; vol. 7, p. 439.
[17] Dk., vol. 9, p. 604.
[18] Dk., vol. 5, p. 310.
[19] Dk., vol. 1, p. 24.
[20] Dk., vol. 6, p. 373.
[21] Dk., vol. 7, p. 456.
[22] Dk., vol. 6, pp. 357, 358.
[23] Dk., vol. 4, p. 257.
[24] Dk., vol. 4, p. 267.

which had settled in Persia from the very early period of her history show us the bitterness of feeling that must have prevailed between Zoroastrians and Jews. A later writer, confounding Kai Lohrasp with Nebuchadnezzar, states that one of the meritorious deeds done by Lohrasp was that he destroyed Jerusalem and scattered the Jews.[25]

Christian propaganda in Iran. Christianity had entered Persia during the Parthian period, and the Sasanians found the creed of Christ more or less current when they established their empire. Of all the alien faiths in Persia, Christianity was the most aggressive. The pertinacious attempt of the Christians to win over converts to their faith from the ruling nation, and their reckless utterances, often caused shedding of human blood. An enthusiastic bishop once regaled his congregation by saying that the soul of the king would, in his future life, be born in hell-fire with Satan, whereas the Christians would be translated to heaven,[26] while another patriarch urged the Roman bishops to free them from the accursed rule of the Persians.[27] All this helped to aggravate the ill-feeling between the Zoroastrians and Christians, and violent scenes ensued. The priests on both the sides became zealots, and occasionally fell into the slough of fanaticism. Great was the fury of religious rancour that prevailed on such occasions. The seceders from Zoroastrianism were persecuted; apostasy was made a capital crime by the Zoroastrian Church, and the renegades were put to death. Notwithstanding such harsh measures adopted by the Iranian clergy, numerous converts were made throughout the whole time of the Sasanian rule from Zoroastrianism to Christianity. Some of the greatest saints were won from the Zoroastrian community. Yazdagard I and Hormizd IV ascended the throne with proclivities for Christianity, and Noshirvan and Khusru Parviz had wedded Christian princesses. Nushzad, one of the sons of the great Sasanian king Noshirvan, was brought up a Christian.[27a] Another ruler of the House of Sasan, Parviz, built a monastery to please his favourite Christian wife.[28] Such royal examples

[25] Mkh. 27. 64, 67; see also Jackson, *Zoroaster*, p. 209, New York, 1899.
[26] Wigram, *History of the Assyrian Church*, p. 43.
[27] *Ib.*, pp. 151, 152.
[27a] Tabari, tr. Nöldeke, pp. 467-474.
[28] Wigram, *History of the Assyrian Church*, p. 259.

encouraged the Christian propaganda in Iran. Yazdagard I, who favoured the Christian cause, was hailed by the Christians as the blessed king, but was branded by his own co-religionists as the wicked sinner.[29]

[29] Shatroihā-i Airān, 26; cf. Wigram, *History of the Assyrian Church*, pp. 85, 86.

CHAPTER XXIV

SECTS

Zoroastrianism split up into a number of sects. As indicated above, the Zoroastrian church had lost all control over its adherents. Sect after sect arose, each claiming to interpret the religion of Zoroaster in its own light. The fact that numerous sects flourished in Iran at this period is proved by the frequent allusions to them by the Greek, Syriac, and Armenian writers. Unfortunately the account of those sects, which we find in the extant Zoroastrian literature, is very meagre. Several of them, about which we get some information from the non-Zoroastrian sources, are not even mentioned by name in the Iranian works. The Armenian writers Eznik and Elisaeus, writing in the fifth century about the Zoroastrians of their own time, state that they were split into two rival sects. Damascius,[1] on the authority of Eudemus, states that sects flourished in Iran which held Space as the primordial being that created the rival spirits of goodness and evil.[2] The most formidable of the sects, which counted eminent persons among its adherents during the Sasanian period and which had a considerable following long after the disappearance of this last Zoroastrian empire, was that of the Zarvanites. Zarvan, or Time, accompanied Mithra in his migration to the far West and was placed at the pinnacle of the divine hierarchy in the Mithraic cult.[3]

Zarvanites

Zarvan according to the Pahlavi writers. This image of the eternal duration of Time is as cold and lifeless in the Pahlavi works as it was in the Avestan texts. Ormazd created it, and

[1] 529 A.D.

[2] *De Primis Princ.*, tr. by Chaignet, *Les Premiers Principes*, vol. 2, p. 129, Paris, 1898.

[3] Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra*, Eng. tr. McCormack, p. 107, Chicago, 1903.

with its creation the entire existence came into motion,[4] or according to another passage, Boundless Time is eternally in Ormazd, and the very first work of his in creation appertained to Time.[5] He brought into being the earthly and heavenly creatures through his own splendour and through the blessing of Time.[6] Zarvan, or Time, is called hungerless and thirstless, painless and deathless, ever-living and ever-predominating over the fleeting things of the universe.[7] Thus the authoritative Zoroastrian works speak of Boundless Time in its relation to Ormazd; just as any system of philosophy or theology may speak of the eternity of God.

Zarvan according to the non-Zoroastrian writers. The account that we get of this being from the writings of the classical and Armenian authors is different from what we find in the Iranian sources. The Armenian and Syrian writers attack Zoroastrianism on this point.[8] Zarvan, or Time, they aver, is held by the Persians to be the generative principle of the universe. Moses of Chorene[9] writes that the Zoroastrians regarded Time as the source and father of existence.[10] According to Photius this being was looked upon as the ruler of the universe; he offered sacrifice in order to beget Hormizdas, but gave birth to Hormizdas and Satan.[11]

The Armenian writer Eznik, in the fifth century A.D., attests the existence of a sect that held Zarvan, or Time, as the sovereign lord and was named after it. The sect, he says, holds Zarvan as the generative principle of everything, and it was from this primordial principle that both Ormazd and Ahriman have sprung. They are its twin children. The Armenian historians credit Mihr Narsih, the premier of Yazdagard II, with speaking of Zarvan as the prime originator of Ormazd and Ahriman.[12] According to the teachings of this sect, as portrayed by these writers, Zarvan existed when the earth was not, and the heaven was not, and brooded over the thought of begetting a son who would create the universe. A doubt crossed his mind, the account

[4] Zsp. 1. 24.
[5] Dk., vol. 6, pp. 415, 416.
[6] Mkh. 8. 8.
[7] Mkh. 8. 9.
[8] Nöldeke, *Festgruss an Roth,* pp. 34-38, Stuttgart, 1893.
[9] 460 A.D.
[10] Cf. Jackson, *Zoroaster,* p. 275.
[11] Theodore of Mopsuestia, *apud* Photius, *Bibl.* 81.
[12] Elisaeus, *The History of Vartan,* pp. 11, 12.

claims, at the end of a thousand years, lest his sacrifice should turn out fruitless and he would not be blessed with a child. The sacrifice, however, turned out fruitful, but not without mishap. Zarvan conceived two offspring, one as the result of his sacrifice, the other as the outcome of the doubt that had desecrated his mind. He resolved to give sovereignty to him who was born first. Ormazd, who seems to have been possessed of foreknowledge even before he was thus born, read the thoughts of his father Zarvan, and gave it out to his comrade in the embryo. Ahriman thereupon perforated the womb and came into existence before Ormazd. He demanded sovereignty from his begetter, Zarvan, who disowned this ugly, dark creature, and gave the sceptre into the hands of Ormazd, who was resplendent with light. Ahriman now charged his father with breaking his vow. In order to free himself from this accusation, Zarvan entered into a covenant with Ahriman, and decreed that the empire of the universe should be conjointly ceded to both Ormazd and Ahriman for nine thousand years, though the right of priority was ever to be with the Good Spirit. After the expiration of this period, Ormazd, it was destined, should be at liberty to deal with his wicked brother as he liked.[13]

This fantastic legend has left no traces whatever in the extant Pahlavi works. They do not even mention any sect which had its designation after Time itself, and we fail to glean any connected account of the doctrines of the Zarvanites from the extant Pahlavi works. Be this as it may, it is certain that a sect of the Zarvanites, who evidently aimed at resolving the Zoroastrian dualism into monotheism by the apotheosis of Time, did flourish for a long time in Iran. Shahristani, who wrote in the early part of the twelfth century, attests, as we shall see later, that he met the followers of this sect in his day.

Fatalists

Fate is the decree of Time. Time and Fate are indissolubly linked together. They are often spoken of as identical with each other.[14] The movements of the heavens regulate Fate, and the planets and constellations are the arbiters of man's fortune.

[13] Cf. Eznik, translated in Wilson's *The Parsi Religion*, pp. 542, 543, Bombay, 1843; Elisaeus, *The History of Vartan*, pp. 11, 12.

[14] Theodore of Mopsuestia, *apud* Photius, *Bibl.* 81.

The good and evil stars determine man's lot, which is linked with the course of the stars. Every good and evil event that falls to the lot of man comes to pass through the doings of the twelve constellations that are ranged on the side of Ormazd, or through the baneful influence of the seven planets, as their special antagonists, arrayed on Ahriman's side. Both of these agents combine to administer the affairs of the world.[15] Ormazd allots happiness to man. If man does not receive it, it is owing to the extortion of these planets.[16] Like brigands and highwaymen they rob the righteous of their good lot and bestow it upon the wicked.[17] Ahriman has specially created them for the purpose of depriving man of the happiness which the good stars would bestow upon man.[18] Like witches they rush upon the creation to spread evil,[19] and pervert every creature that comes across their path.[20] Fate, as the guardian of the celestial sphere, is therefore implored to help mankind at all times and in every deed.[21] That which is ordained to come to pass will unfailingly happen; man should not worry over things over which he has no control. He should learn to receive with tranquillity and calm whatever falls to his lot.[22] Though nothing in the world can rescind the inexorable decree of Fate,[23] divine Providence, moved by the prayers and supplications of mortals, can still, in special cases, intervene in mortal behalf. Owing to the counter-movements of the evil planets, Providence rarely interferes.[24]

The inscrutable power of Fate. Among the masses humility is apt to degenerate into servility in human affairs, or into fatalism in their relations with the superhuman powers. In Persia, the dissolution of the great empire, and the centuries of struggle and servitude that followed the national catastrophe, drove the Iranians to believe in Fate, the inevitable necessity before which they had to bow. The fatalist doctrine pervades the writings of the Pahlavi period. As early as the fifth century the Armenian controversialist Eznik attacks this fatalistic doctrine of the Persians.[24a] Fate, we are told, is written on man's forehead; he is fettered to it from his very birth.[25] Man is

[15] Mkh. 8. 17-19, 21.
[16] Mkh. 38. 4, 5.
[17] Sg. 4. 24-27.
[18] Mkh. 12. 7-9.
[19] Sg. 4. 9.
[20] Mkh. 8. 20.
[21] SIS. 22. 31.
[22] SIS. 20. 13; Mkh. 27. 11.
[23] SIS. 20. 17; Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. A. 6, pp. 36, 37.
[24] Mkh. 24. 3-8.
[24a] Eznik, *Against the Sects,* German tr. Schmid, 2. 15, Vienna, 1900.
[25] Mkh. 24. 6.

ignorant of the course mapped out for him by Fate, which guides the affairs of the world.[26] Fate holds sovereign sway over every one and everything.[27] Vazurgmitra states that the world shows that fools prosper and the wise suffer, for which reason he upholds the view that the ordering of results of man's actions is not in man's hands, but rests with Fate.[28]

Under the influence of Fate the wise man fails of his wisdom, and the fool shows intelligence, the hero becomes a coward, and the coward plays the part of a hero, the industrious turn out to be indolent, and the indolent become industrious.[29] When Fate befriends an indolent, ignorant, and wicked man, his sloth becomes like unto diligence, his ignorance unto knowledge, and his wickedness unto righteousness. On the other hand, when Fate frowns upon a wise man and a good, his wisdom is transformed to foolishness and ignorance, and his knowledge, skill, and worthiness do not help him in the least.[30] Life, wife, and child, power or fortune alike, come all through Fate.[31]

How far Fate affects man's exertions. Replying to the query whether man gets various things through Fate or through his own exertion, Vazurgmitra, the talented premier of Noshirvan, states that both of these are as closely linked together as are man's body and life. As the body falls a ruined tabernacle of clay when life has quitted it, and as life without the body is an intangible wind, so are Fate and exertion indissolubly united with each other.[32] Fate is the efficient cause, and exertion is the means through which man attains to everything.[33] It is true that exertion is of no avail when Fate has ordained otherwise. Man may toil, and yet may not reap the fruit of his labour. But then, man's exertion in good works, even if not rewarded with fruitful results in this world, will reap a benefit in the next world through the angels. Man, therefore, has to depend upon the doings of Fate for the good of this world, but upon his own actions for the spiritual goods to be enjoyed in the world hereafter.[34]

[26] Mkh. 27. 10.
[27] Mkh. 47. 7.
[28] Ibn Isfandiyar, *History of Tabaristan*, tr. Browne, pp. 85, 86, London, 1905.
[29] Mkh. 23. 5-7.
[30] Mkh. 51. 5-7.
[31] Dd. 71. 3; Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. D. 1, p. 75; Jamaspi, p. 122.
[32] Gs. 56.
[33] Gs. 57.
[34] Phl. Vd. 5. 8; Mkh. 22. 4-6.

Through Fate man performs meritorious deeds.[35] Man, it is true, is dependent upon the decree of Fate as regards his earthly possessions, but it is left only to his individual exertion whether he shall reap the reward of righteousness or the retribution of wickedness.[36] Tansar, in his letter to Jasnaf, the king of Tabaristan, writes that it is wrong to deny the sovereign sway of Fate over man's life, but it is equally wrong to give up personal effort under the exaggerated idea of the influence of Fate. The wise, he continues, should take the middle course, for Fate and man's free will are like two loads on the back of an animal. If either is heavier than the other, both fall down.[37]

Despite such prominence given to the workings of Fate by the Pahlavi writers, fatalism never came to be employed among the Zoroastrians as an excuse for cloaking man's indolence. It is idle persons, we are told, that blame Fate.[38] The ever active spirit of Zoroastrianism militated against fatalism, and saved the nation from its baneful influences.

[35] Dk., vol. 9, p. 585.
[36] Dd. 71. 3.
[37] Darmesteter, *Lettre de Tansar au roi de Tabaristan,* in JA., 1894, 1. p. 553.
[38] AnAtM., 119.

CHAPTER XXV

HERESIES

Heretics detested more than the demon-worshippers. Heresy was one of the greatest crimes of which a Zoroastrian could be guilty according to the ancient texts. It was a criminal offence punishable by law. The severity of the law, however, was considerably modified during the Sasanian period, even though the works written during this period do not show any considerable advance in real religious toleration. In his letter to the king of Tabaristan, Tansar states that, in the statutes which Ardashir had framed, he had greatly modified the rigour of the law; for, whereas formerly a heretic was instantly killed, Tansar's royal master had ordered that such a sinner should be imprisoned for one year, and that the religion of Ormazd should be preached to him daily during that period in order to reclaim him from heresy. If he still persisted obstinately in his heretical belief, capital punishment was to be inflicted upon him as a last resort.[1] Any one also who did not give assent to the dogmatic teachings of the Zoroastrian creed, or expounded views that were at variance with those sanctioned by her authority, incurred the odium of heresy, and came under the ban of ecclesiastical excommunication. The Church forbade with proscription any criticism of its authoritative canon; the ecclesiastical doctrine was fixed, and to think otherwise was heresy. Giving the definition of a heretic, the Dinkart states that whosoever teaches, speaks, or acts respecting the beliefs and practices of the national faith differently from that which the ancients have done is a heretic.[2-3] Heretics are of three kinds: the deceiver, deceived, and the opinionated.[4] All of these misrepresent the teachings of the elders, and pervert the sacred writ-

[1] Darmesteter, *Lettre de Tansar au roi de Tabaristan*, in JA., 1894, I. p. 524.

[2-3] Vol. 12, bk. 6. c. 26, p. 58.

[4] Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. c. 83, p. 74.

ings,[5] as they declaim against the established teachings.[6] They promote, in opposition to Ormazd, the wicked religion of Ahriman.[7] The heretic is possessed by the Evil Spirit.[8] He is the disciple of the demon of heresy.[9] The demons lodge in his body;[10] he is, in fact, a demon in human form.[11] Even during his lifetime, his body resembles a corpse and the faithful should refrain from coming in contact with him, lest they themselves become defiled.[12] Bad as is his lot in this world, it is worse in the world to come. His soul is doomed to everlasting torture. It becomes a darting snake, and there is no resurrection for it.[13] For these reasons, men are warned to guard themselves from anything that savours of heresy.[14] The Pahlavi writers, in every treatise, are unsparing in their denunciation of heretics, arraigning them for deception, lying, and perversion. The heretic Gurgi is called a disreputable impostor, full of avarice, and worthy of every opprobrium.[15] In a similar manner, the Pahlavi works swarm with invectives against Mani, as arch-heretic in the third century A.D., to whose account we now turn.

Mani

The arch-heretic of the Sasanian period. This remarkable man was born in the reign of Ardavan, the last of the Parthian kings. He received his first revelation at the age of thirteen, and ultimately claimed to be a prophet, the very seal or the last messenger of God.[16] He began his propaganda under Ardashir, but worked with greater vigour under Shapur I, who embraced his faith.[17] Manichaeism flourished with varied success side by side with the state religion until the time when Bahram I ascended

[5] Dk., vol. 1, p. 3.
[6] Dk., vol. 1, p. 5.
[7] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 53. 2, p. 328.
[8] Dk., vol. 7, p. 474.
[9] Phl. Ys. 44. 14.
[10] Phl. Ys. 47. 4.
[11] Dk., vol. 1, p. 15.
[12] Dk., vol. 1, p. 31.
[13] SIS. 17. 7.
[14] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 128, p. 35.
[15] Dk., vol. 5, p. 320.
[16] Al-Biruni, *Chronology of Ancient Nations*, tr. Sachau, pp. 189, 190. London, 1879; Mirkhond, *Rauzat-us Safa*, tr. Rehatsek. part 1, vol. 2. p. 336, London, 1892.
[17] Mirkhond, pp. 333, 336; al-Ya'qubi, quoted by Browne, *Literary History of Persia*, 1. 156, New York, 1902.

the throne. The teachings of Mani acquired a strong hold over the minds of many, and threatened to be a powerful rival of the ancient faith. The national spirit rebelled against the encroachment of the new cult, and the king strove to extinguish the heresy by the exercise of a firm hand. He confronted Mani with his Dastur, who threw him a challenge that both of them should pour molten lead on their bellies, and whosoever came out unhurt should be declared to be in the right. This Mani did not accept. Consequently in A.D. 276-7 he was flayed to death and his body was stuffed with straw.[18] With the removal of Mani from the field of activity, the Manichaean propaganda entered upon its dissolution in Iran, but the seed of the new faith he had sown did not remain unfruitful. Despite the heavy slaughter of the Manichaeans, the new cult spread from the home of its origin to the far East, reaching even as far as China, and penetrated far into the West in the fourth century, where for some time it contested supremacy with Christianity, somewhat as Persian Mithraism had done before it.

The Pahlavi writers vehemently attack Mani and his followers. He is dubbed a druj [19] of evil origin,[20] and his followers are branded as deceivers, empty-skulled persons that practised witchcraft and deceitfulness, and taught folly in the way of secret societies;[21] they are denounced as deluding the uninformed and unintelligent, and as capturing the men of little knowledge in their esoteric circle.[22]

Mani's eclectic system. Mani based his new religion on materials drawn from Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Syrian Gnosticism. His new religion differed in its cardinal principles from Zoroastrianism. Some of the more prominent features of Manichaeism, which are fundamentally foreign to the spirit of Zoroastrianism, are the ascetic principles of self-mortification, celibacy, fasting, and the vow of poverty. Each of these in turn we shall examine from the point of view of Zoroastrianism, and seek at the same time to determine the basic difference between the two theories of life.

[18] Al-Biruni, p. 191; al-Ya'qubi, cited by Browne, *Literary History of Persia*, 1. 157; Mirkhond, p. 337; Tabari, translated by Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser und Araber*, p. 47, Leyden, 1879.
[19] Dk., vol. 5, pp. 315-317.
[20] Dk., vol. 4, p. 211.
[21] Sg. 10. 59, 60.
[22] Sg. 10. 75-77.

Mani holds matter to be the root of evil, hence self-mortification of the body is a virtue in his system. The body as composed of matter, according to this thinker, is inherently evil. On this very ground he denies the final resurrection.[23] Manichaeism brands all bodily desires as evil and legislates for their stifling and killing. Since all evil has its root in the body, salvation is possible only through the extirpation of bodily desires. Mani's system of religion becomes quietistic, ascetic, and inculcates only passive virtues. He taught his followers to abhor all natural pleasures and abandon them. He strove to extinguish the fire of the bodily desires. The devout was to begin by abstaining from every comfort and from every amusement. In spite of this, temptations assail him on all sides, so long as he lives in the midst of earthly attachments. To adopt a practical image, the centipede does not lose much if one of its legs is broken; so man is not safe when he succeeds in eradicating one desire, for another takes its place and haunts him in the quiet moments, even when the ardent longing of communing with the divine consumes him. He is still overcome by passion, by the desire of wife and child, of hearth and home. He feels that he cannot liberate himself from the unbearable yoke of these strong passions, unless he flees from the world to some solitary place where joys and sorrows cannot reach him. Life, such a one thinks, is a fleeting illusion. It cannot give him enduring calm. Accordingly, he breaks his family ties, shuns society, becomes a hermit, and lives a life of complete quiescence. He courts negation.

Zoroastrianism stands for controlling and regulating bodily desires, but not for suppressing and killing them. The antithesis of body and soul, flesh and spirit, is not unknown to the Pahlavi writers. But the body in itself is not evil. According to Zoroastrianism, matter is not inherently evil, and life in the flesh is not necessarily death in the spirit. Zarathushtra legislates for the material as well as the spiritual side of our nature. A healthy body alone can nurture a healthy mind, and it is through the agency of these two prime factors that the spirit can work out her destiny. Man can act righteousness and assail wickedness only with a sound body. The faithful craves for a long life in the body in this world, before he is allotted an

[23] Sg. 16. 50.

eternal life of spirit in heaven. Bodily life in this world is sacred, it is a pledge; Ormazd has confided this most precious of his gifts to man that he may join with his Heavenly Father in securing the ultimate triumph of good over evil and thus usher the divine Kingdom of Righteousness into the world. The soul rules over the body as a householder rules over a family or a rider rides his horse.[24] It is the stubborn slave of the soul, and with the exercise of self-control it is to be converted into an obedient servant always ready to carry out the mandates of its master.[25] The body is an indispensable vehicle of the soul and the saintly soul drives in it on the path of Righteousness. It is only in the case of the wicked, in whom the flesh gains victory over the spirit, that it becomes a heavy burden, its wheels refuse to move, sticking in the quagmire of sin. But then the fault lies with the driver. It is only when the individual lives solely for the body, feasts his lustful eyes on the vices of the flesh, and is a willing slave to the bodily passions, that the body turns out to be the grave of the soul.[26] Whoso lives in this world for the body alone and is immersed in bodily pleasures, loses in spirit in the next world, but whoso works for the soul, makes the spiritual existence more his own.[27] Just as a person going without shoes on a road infested with serpents and scorpions is constantly on guard lest the noxious creatures bite him, so a man should always beware of his bodily passions.[28] The great Sasanian pontiff Adarbad said that whenever any harm befell his body, he took consolation that it did not affect his soul, which was of greater significance.[29] Whosoever lives in this world with a view to the betterment of his soul, reaps the future reward, but whoso lives exclusively for the body, sees his body ultimately crumbling into dust with no hopes for the welfare of the spiritual existence.[30] The wicked conducts his soul after the bodily desires, but the righteous man should regulate his body in conformity with the higher desires of the soul.[31] The body is the halter to the soul, and the faithful one is reminded that he should so act in the world that neither the soul nor the body suffers for the other, but if that is not possible, he should prefer the soul to the

[24] Dk., vol. 6, pp. 353, 380, 381.
[25] Dk., vol. 1, p. 56.
[26] Dk., vol. 8, p. 469.
[27] Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. A. 2, p. 33.
[28] Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. B. 47, pp. 49, 50.
[29] Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. A. 5, pp. 35, 36.
[30] SIS. 20. 10.
[31] Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. 285, p. 8.

body and be prepared to sacrifice it for the good of the soul.[32] The soul profits when the inordinate bodily pleasures are foregone.[33] The man who is prepared to dedicate his body for the sake of his soul or religion practises true generosity.[34] Though the body is the bane of the spirit, it is not branded as inherently evil. Man may work with the body, yet he may live for the soul. Discipline rather than austerity is the Zoroastrian watchword. Self-mortification does not form part of the Zoroastrian theology. With due self-control the devout has to conquer the flesh in order to be victor in spirit; he has to subdue his bodily nature, but not to suppress it. The body is not to be reduced to a skeleton. Zoroastrianism demands a sound and a strong body to enable man to effectively combat the hydra of evil in this world. Uncleanliness of body is one of the ascetic virtues. It is repugnant to the spirit of Zoroastrianism, which stands for bodily purity. Purity of body contributes to purity of spirit. Bodily uncleanliness means spiritual pollution, and wantonly weakening the body is a sin. Monastic life is unknown to the Zoroastrians of all periods. Christianity had entered Iran under the Parthian rule, and monasteries of both the sexes flourished in the Assyrian Church during the Sasanian period. Far from exerting any influence upon the Zoroastrians, they were looked upon with great aversion by them.

Celibacy, a virtue with Mani, a vice with Zoroaster. Manichaeism extols celibacy as the greatest virtue. For those initiated in the higher orders Mani advocated celibacy. When the ardent longing for the love of God swallows up all other desires and becomes the controlling factor of the devout, he is enjoined to take a vow of continence. He should not enter into matrimonial alliance if he desires to serve God whole-heartedly. Marriage is declared incompatible with sanctity; it is accounted impure and defiling. Mani forbids sexual intercourse as the worst type of uncleanliness.[35] Virginity is the highest form of life. Body being the formation of Ahriman, the propagation of lineage and the breeding of families are evil.[36] Marriage prolongs the life of mankind, and so retards the union of the human species with God.

All this is in direct antagonism to the teachings of Zoroaster.

[32] Dk., vol. 10, bk. 6. 25, p. 8.
[33] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 89, p. 2.
[34] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 91, p. 5.
[35] Al-Biruni, p. 190.
[36] Sg. 16. 40, 41.

In no period of the history of his religion was celibacy ever held a virtue. Those practising it were not considered more holy and held in higher reverence, as among the Manichaeans, but their action was strongly reprehended. Even the priests were not to be celibates, for it is a cardinal point of the faith of every true Zoroastrian that he shall marry and rear a family.[37] Ormazd prefers the man who lives a life of marital happiness to the one who lives in continence.[38] Whoso does not marry and propagate lineage hinders the work of Renovation, and is wicked.[39] Marriage is doubly an obligation, being a religious duty to the Church, a civic duty to the State. Hence both the Church and the State encouraged married life in Iran. It is considered a highly meritorious form of charity to help a poor man to marry.[40] Herodotus remarks that the Persian kings gave prizes to those who were blessed with many children.[41] The Zoroastrian works of all periods exhort the faithful to enter into matrimony. Mar Shiman, the chief bishop of the Christian settlers in Iran, was accused by the Mobads before Shapur II to the effect that he and his clergy were teaching men to refrain from marriage and the procreation of children.[42] King Yazdagard II saw great danger to the State in the spread of such doctrines among the masses. If they caught the contagion, says his royal edict, the world would soon come to an end.[43] Such were the strong feelings against any form of celibacy that prevailed at all times in Persia; and even in Mani's system the stringency was generally relaxed in case of the masses. Marriage was tolerated as a source of relief to their unrestrained sexual appetites. It was a necessary evil in their case. But in the case of the clergy and of other righteous persons who aimed at higher life, it was obligatory that they should be celibates. Zoroastrianism legislates for the clergy and the laity alike. In Mani's system marriage was a vice for the priest, a reluctant concession to the layman. According to the religion of Zoroaster, it is neither the one nor the other; it is a positive virtue for both. Sacerdotal piety does not tend to celibacy in Iran. It is disapproved for all and under all circum-

[37] Dk., vol. 9, pp. 609, 634, 637, 639; Gs. 123, 155.
[38] Vd. 4. 47.
[39] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 92, pp. 6, 7.
[40] Vd. 4. 44.
[41] 1. 136.
[42] Wigram, *History of the Assyrian Church*, p. 64, London, 1910.
[43] Elisaeus, *History of Vartan*, p. 13.

stances. In no stage of the individual's moral and spiritual development is marriage ever considered as incompatible with saintliness.

Fasting recommended by Manichaeism, condemned by Zoroastrianism. Mani advocated the abstinence from food as a means of expiation for sin.[44] Nearly a quarter of the year was set apart by him as the period of fast. If there is one thing more than another which Zoroaster teaches, it is that man shall never serve Ormazd by fasting and austerities, but only by prayers and work. Far from recommending these ascetic practices as virtues, he prohibits them as sins. Fasting formed no part of the religion of ancient Iran at any period of her history. It is strongly reprobated in the works of all periods. Fasting is a sin, and the only fast that the faithful are exhorted to keep is the fast from sin.[45] The wilful abstinence from food is a deliberate disregard of the bounty of Ormazd. In his exaggerated idea of the need of fasting, the ascetic weakens his body, and practically starves himself to death by a rigorous system of fasts. Zoroastrianism enjoins that man should take sufficient food to keep his body strong and active, and not make it languid by withholding the due share of food from it. With a feeble body man could not work strenuously for the furtherance of the world of righteousness, and carry on a vigorous warfare against the world of wickedness; and this, according to the Zoroastrian belief, is the chief object of man's life on earth.

Mani's doctrine of poverty in the light of Zoroastrianism. The saint in Mani's system holds earthly things as so many distractions. The things of sense are impure. He tries to avoid them, and gradually gives them up one by one. He makes a vow of poverty. Wealth is looked upon as a source of temptation. Material commodities are regarded as satisfying the lower nature of man. The accumulation of property beyond that which would enable him to purchase food for one day or clothing for one year is forbidden.[46] The true hermit renounces all personal effort, does not think of providing for the morrow, and with passive resignation looks to God for what he may send to him. All ascetic orders where the vow of poverty is overemphasized give rise to mendicants and beggars living upon the alms of others. Among other evils mendicancy brings a drain on the

[44] Al-Biruni, p. 190. [45] Sd. 83. 1-6. [46] Al-Biruni, p. 190.

resources of a society. For that reason it is not consecrated in Zoroastrianism. In fact it was not recognized at any period in the religious history of Iran. It is not a sin to acquire riches and accumulate property. The sin originates with the improper use of one's possessions, and the faithful are expressly warned not to lust for and indulge exclusively in the accumulation of the material wealth at the expense of the spiritual.[47] This reprimand serves as a corrective to the unbridled desire to covet earthly riches.[48] Wealth of the spirit is undoubtedly superior to that of the body. As regards the use of the wealth of this world man should work as if he were going to live a life of a thousand years, and as if what he failed to do to-day he could easily perform the next day. But when it comes to the question of the spiritual riches, he should act with the fear that he might perhaps live only a day more in this world, and that if he postponed to-day's good work till to-morrow, death might overtake him and prevent him from accomplishing it.[49] One should choose rather to be poor for the spirit than to be rich without it. Losing the spirit for the sake of earthly riches is wrong. But accumulating earthly riches with upright means and expending them for the welfare of the spirit is meritorious. Srosh helps the man who has riches and plenty, and who, far from yielding to temptations, makes good use of his fortune.[50] Wealth helps a righteous man to perform meritorious deeds,[51] whereas grinding poverty at times occasions wickedness.[52] If a man craves for a vast fortune with a firm resolve to spend it for charitable purposes, his desire is laudable.[53] It is praiseworthy that man should spend his earthly riches for his spiritual welfare.[54] Wealth is given to man not to squander on himself, but to help the poor and the needy, and assuage the wrongs of suffering humanity.[55] When misused, wealth becomes a halter to the body, and the wise one should sacrifice it, for the good of his soul.[56] Man should not be in-

[47] Dk., vol. 3, p. 129; vol. 5, pp. 314, 315; vol. 11, bk. 6. 149, 150, p. 49.
[48] Dk., vol. 13, bk. 6. E. 16, pp. 4, 5.
[49] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 151, p. 49.
[50] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 90, pp. 4, 5.
[51] Dk., vol. 4, p. 192.
[52] Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. 283, p. 8.
[53] Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. 310, pp. 25, 26.
[54] Dk., vol. 6, p. 418.
[55] Dk., vol. 3, p. 142; AnAtM. 47.
[56] Dk., vol. 10, bk. 6. 26, pp. 8, 9.

toxicated with pride when he is in the plenitude of his riches and at the height of fortune, and must not hate the poor, for his fortune might leave him at any moment and place him in the class of the paupers.[57] He is reminded that howsoever rich he grows, his wealth could never exceed that of Jamshid. And yet that great king found his wealth deserting him when his end approached.[58] The kingdoms of the kings with all their fabulous fortunes are not everlasting.[59] One should not be proud of his fortune. It is but vanity; it is as fleeting and transient as a dream.[60] It changes its masters like a bird that flies from one tree to another, only to leave that in turn for still another.[61] At death wealth and property do not accompany the owner, but go into others' possession.[62] None should be proud of his possessions and count upon them as exclusively his own, for at the time of death even the palaces and treasures are of no avail, and the owner does not take them with him on his journey heavenward.[63] A wealthy man rolling in riches is healthy in the morning, becomes ill at noon, and quietly passes from this world before night; his fortune does not help him to avert this calamity.[64] Wealth and rank are the accidents of life, they do not constitute the real greatness of man. Righteousness alone is the true riches and man cannot get it in the next world on loan.[65]

Mazdak

The economic basis of his religious reform. The second great heretic of this period who had a considerable following was a pious Mobad named Mazdak, son of Bamdat. He is called the accursed heterodox who observes fasts,[66] who appeared to cause disturbance among the faithful.[67] He was contemporary with Kobad.[68] Mazdak agreed with the fundamental doctrine of Zoroastrianism in respect to the indelible antithesis between the two principles, Light and Darkness, or Ormazd and Ahri-

[57] AnAtM. 57.
[58] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 152, pp. 49, 50.
[59] Gs. 1.
[60] Gs. 58.
[61] An At M. 88.
[62] AnAtM. 145.
[63] Gs. 169.
[64] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 200, pp. 71, 72.
[65] An KhK. 5.
[66] BYt. 2. 21; Phl. Vd. 4. 49.
[67] BYt. 1. 6.
[68] 488-531 A.D.

man.[69] Referring to the ascetic element in the teachings of this heretic, Mirkhond states that Mazdak prohibited animal food.[70] Mazdak's revolutionary reform, however, was not so much religious as it was social and economic, for he preached communism, pure and simple, even the community of wives in common.

The account of Mazdak's system is very meagre; but it is known that he accounted Jealousy, Wrath, and Greed as the three main causes of all evil in the world. Every one, according to Mazdak's teachings, should be given equal opportunity and equal share of the enjoyment of the earthly possessions of God. So it was originally ordained by God, but that natural order has been upset by the aggressive strong for their own self-aggrandizement. Society should therefore return to that original ideal state. These revolutionary teachings thrilled for a time Iran, and exercised a powerful fascination on the masses. The crisis was brought to a head when far from taking any initiative to stamp out the heresy, the king encouraged it, and finally embraced it. His son, Prince Noshirvan, summoned the Dasturs and Mobads to consider the situation. It was certain that the cult would spread and the young prince adopted severe measures to suppress it, lest it should menace the public peace. The clergy, who viewed the new heresy with great alarm, advised rigorous measures to extirpate the threatening creed. Mazdak did not live long to preach his doctrine, for the prince arranged a banquet for him and his followers, and put them all to the sword in A.D. 528.

This communistic socialistic sect received therewith a fatal blow from which it never wholly recovered, but it maintained a feeble spark of life for a considerable time.

[69] Dabistan, tr. Shea and Troyer, 1. 373-375; al-Biruni, tr. Sachau, p. 192.

[70] Sacy, *Mémoires sur diverses Antiquités de la Perse*, p. 355.

CHAPTER XXVI

ORMAZD

The supreme godhead. Ormazd is the Pahlavi equivalent of the Avestan Ahura Mazda in the Pahlavi writings of the Sasanian period and later. The concept of the Highest Being retains its former abstract and spiritual character in the works of the Pahlavi writers. Ormazd is what the entire creation is not, and he is not what anything in the universe is. The author of the Dinkart describes him by negatives, and states that Ormazd is the sovereign, and not slave; father, and not child; first, and not last; master, and not servant; lord, and not serf; protector, and not protected; changeless, and not changeable; knowledge itself, and not acquiring knowledge; giver and not receiver.[1] We shall presently discuss some of the most prominent of the divine attributes which the Pahlavi works ascribe to Ormazd.

Ormazd is eternal. Ormazd had no beginning and has no end. His adversary is inferior to him in this respect, that there will be a time when he will not exist. Ormazd ever was, is, and will ever be.[2] He is the causer of causes, himself being causeless.[3] He is the prime source of existence.[4]

Ormazd is invisible. The concept of the spirituality of Ormazd remains unchanged. He is the Spirit of Spirits.[5] Invisibility is the chief characteristic of spirituality, and Ormazd is said to be invisible.[6] He is so even to the other spiritual beings.[7] Though present in everything, he is unseen anywhere.[8] When Viraf is escorted by Srosh and Atar to the celestial court, and presented by Vohuman to Ormazd he hears the voice of Ormazd, sees a light, but does not see him face to face.[9] The souls of the righteous ones behold the place of Ormazd in heaven, and console themselves as having seen Ormazd himself.[10]

[1] Vol. 3, pp. 176, 177.
[2] Bd. 1. 3; Dk., vol. 2, p. 103; Gs. 128.
[3] Dk., vol. 9, p. 572.
[4] Dk., vol. 3, p. 157.
[5] Dd. 31. 6; Sg. 1. 2; Dk., vol. 2. p. 103.
[6] Dk., vol. 6, p. 390.
[7] Dd. 31. 6.
[8] Dk., vol. 3, p. 174.
[9] AV. 11. 1-6; 101. 10-12.
[10] Dd. 19. 4.

He is intangible. The Gathic and Later Avestan texts spoke figuratively of the hands, mouth, eyes, and body of Ormazd. In the Pahlavi texts Zaratusht is portrayed as sitting by the side of the Lord and saying to him that the head, hands, feet, hair, mouth, tongue, and even clothes of Ormazd resembled his own, and therefore he wished to grasp the Heavenly Father with his hands. Ormazd thereupon tells him that this is impossible, for, as the godhead, he is intangible.[11] A later text, on the contrary, speaks of Ormazd as taking hold of the prophet's hand and giving him wisdom in the shape of water to swallow.[12]

He is omniscient. In his knowledge of the past, present, and future Ormazd is without an equal.[13] It is he alone who is called the all-knowing one.[14] He knows all that is to come, and is aware of the final overthrow and end of his adversary.[15] Through his wisdom it is that man can guide himself in the path of righteousness.[16] Owing to his power of comprehending everything, he is the best judge of man.[17] He knows the inmost recesses of man's heart, for no secrets are hid from him.

He is omnipotent. Despite his rival who always thwarts his work, Ormazd is called omnipotent and all-ruling.[18] Everything in the world has some superior, Ormazd alone has none.[19] He is not wanting in anything.[20] The strongest of men feels himself impotent before the Lord. There are moments in each man's life during which his strength fails him, and he longs for the invisible power to lean upon. Ormazd is the power to turn to, for he is all-protecting.[21]

Ormazd is the creator and conservator of creation. He has created the entire creation.[22] Through his wisdom he has brought the world into being and exercises his providential care

[11] SIS. 15. 2, 3.
[12] BYt. 2. 4, 5.
[13] Bd. 1. 2; Dk., vol. 1, p. 34.
[14] Bd. 1. 2; Sg. 1. 1; 8. 49; Dk., vol. 1, p. 34; vol. 2, p. 103; vol. 3, p. 140; vol. 5, p. 331; vol. 6, pp. 390, 412, 416; vol. 7, pp. 440, 452; vol. 8, pp. 429, 461, 485; vol. 9, p. 594; Jsp., p. 110.
[15] Bd. 1. 13, 17, 20; Zsp. 1. 2; Dk., vol. 4, p. 258.
[16] Dk., vol. 3, p. 174.
[17] Dk., vol. 7, p. 473.
[18] Sg. 1. 1; Dk., vol. 1, p. 34; vol. 2, p. 103; vol. 3, pp. 140, 157; vol. 6, pp. 390, 412; vol. 7, p. 440.
[19] Dk., vol. 3, p. 177.
[20] Dk., vol. 3, p. 174; vol. 6, p. 412.
[21] Dk., vol. 7, p. 440.
[22] Dk., vol. 3, pp. 163, 179.

to maintain it.[23] He is the father of man,[24] and it is man's sacred duty to obey his heavenly creator.[25] He is the father and lord of creation.[26] He has created the good creatures, that they may participate in removing the blemish-giver from the world.[27] Like the weaver he has woven multifarious objects on the loom of nature.[28] Progress of his creatures is his constant wish.[29] He is the eternal source of all blessings and benefactions.

He is all-good. The creator is supreme in goodness;[30] he is all-goodness without any evil.[31] Whatever is good in the world proceeds from him.[32] He is foremost in goodness;[33] always wishing good, and never contemplating evil of any kind.[34] His goodness extends to the good and evil alike,[35] for his desire is all-beneficent.[36] This is manifest from the infinite care which he takes of his creatures,[37] as he is the preserver and protector of man through his perfect goodness.[38] Man should discipline his soul to trust in the goodness of Ormazd.

He is all-merciful. The Heavenly Father is the source of mercy and is all-merciful.[39] He is the lord of beneficence.[40] He is merciful to those who turn to him in joy and sorrow. When man looks to Ahriman and not to Ormazd for guidance, he incurs the divine displeasure. Yet even if man in this way may be out of Ormazd's approbation, he is still not out of his mercy. The deity knows the infirmities of human nature and the weaknesses of the human heart, and forgives man's iniquity and transgression, if, penitent, the sinner approaches his Heavenly Father with heartfelt contrition,[41] firmly resolving to redeem his sinful past by good deeds present and future.

At the end of time, Ormazd will gather back all his creatures to himself.[42] Even the sinners will not be lost forever. Yet all this while the merciful Lord desires that man may not even now leave his blessed company, for it grieves him that man

[23] Dk., vol. 5, p. 324; vol. 12, bk. 6. 311, p. 26.
[24] Gs. 122.
[25] Dk., vol. 4, p. 268.
[26] Dk., vol. 5, p. 323.
[27] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 135, p. 39.
[28] Dk., vol. 7, p. 425.
[29] Dd. 3. 1, 2.
[30] Bd. 1. 2.
[31] Zsp. 1. 17.
[32] Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6 B. 2, p. 38.
[33] Dd. 37. 127; Dk., vol. 4, p. 194.
[34] Mkh. 8. 22.
[35] Mkh. 38. 4.
[36] Sg. 8. 53.
[37] Sg. 8. 57, 58.
[38] Dk., vol. 3, p. 140.
[39] Dk., vol. 6, p. 385.
[40] Mkh. 1. 1.
[41] Dk., vol. 1, p. 9.
[42] Dk., vol. 6, p. 416.

should suffer even temporarily through his own perverse conduct, and thus postpone the ultimate renovation.

Ormazd is light physically, morally he is truth. When Viraf, as hallowed visitant of true faith to the realms supernal, is escorted by Srosh and Atar as angel guides to the presence of Ormazd, the sage finds to his utter bewilderment that, although the almighty Lord is graciously pleased to greet him with audible divine words, he himself can see nothing in the ineffable presence but the sovereign light.[43] This endless light is emblematic of Ormazd, who dwells therein.[44] All light proceeds from Ormazd.[45] In the moral sphere Ormazd is eternal truth. Porphyry of Tyre[46] says that he learnt from the Magi that they upheld the view that the body of Ormazd resembled light, and his soul was a likeness of truth.[47]

He is all-just. Great is the goodness of Ormazd, but his justice demands that he shall not make awards regardless of the merits or demerits of man. He is the divine law-giver, and as such he is the sovereign judge. The guilty man who affronts him, the sinner who lives and moves without contrition in his heart, the rebel who discards divine authority, all need a corrective. As the lord of mercy he forgives, but as the lord of justice he punishes as well. He is the giver of the reward of merit,[48] and does not let pass a single good deed of man unrewarded.[49]

Man should devote himself body and soul to Ormazd. Man has an inborn impulse that prompts him to strive after the divine. He looks to God for the satisfaction of the yearnings of his heart, even though the Evil Spirit ever struggles to steal away his heart from Ormazd. In the age-long conflict between good and evil, man's soul forms the prize of the two combatants. Whether he shall be a willing prize in the hands of Ormazd, or a rebel prey in the clutches of Ahriman, rests with him. Man, therefore, should learn to know himself. Religion best teaches him to do this. This knowledge of the self it is that will put him into right relation with his Heavenly Father, and thus save him from falling a victim to Druj.[50] Man toils to teach the parrot and the pet nightingale, but neglects to tame himself in the service of the Lord. The animal in his makeup asserts itself under such cir-

[43] AV. 101. 4-12.
[44] Bd. 1. 2; Zsp. 1. 2.
[45] Gs. 132.
[46] About 230-300 A.D.
[47] *Vita Pyth.*, 41.
[48] Dk., vol. 6, p. 361.
[49] Dk., vol. 6, pp. 385, 386.
[50] Dk., vol. 6, p. 356.

cumstances and prevents his spirit from singing glory to his creator. Man's evil thoughts and sensual appetites, hampering his spiritual growth, prove to be only so many turns and windings that lead him astray from the path of Ormazd to that of Ahriman. Well can we see why man has constantly to beware of these; the tempestuous storm may overtake him at any moment, if he has not made any provision in the hour of calm. There is no hope for the individual who demeans and debases himself, and is loath to leave the path of wickedness. It is through the help of Ormazd that man can liberate himself from the evil designs of Ahriman, and make himself worthy for eternal bliss.[51]

Man should further know Ormazd, for to know him is to follow him. This is the desire of the godhead.[52] He loves man with the love of a father for his child.[53] It behooves man to live in accordance with the divine will, and to offer to him worship and glorification.[54] He is worthy of man's praise because of his wise dispensation unto man.[55] Purity of thought, word, and deed is the most acceptable sacrifice to be given to Ormazd. The righteous person who furthers his creation by his holy deeds pleases him most.[56]

Devotion to Ormazd should dominate man's entire being, and man stands firm as a rock in the midst of trials and sufferings as long as he lives for Ormazd. Woe unto him who ceases to be good, for Ormazd departs from his sinful person and the wicked man becomes a partner of Ahriman.[57] The strongest of the strong has to turn to God for succour in the moment of overwhelming trouble, and Ormazd's help is the best preservative of man from all calamities. In the moment of the bitterest anguish, when man's heart sinks under sorrow, when cramping and sordid poverty brings depression, when the cup of misery is filled to the brim, and the spirit is wrung with grief, man finds the final refuge in him.[58] When man is devoutly resigned to Ormazd, he is saved from all troubles.[59]

In his divinity, moreover, Ormazd desires that man shall not come to him simply when reduced to dire extremities, but shall be constant in his devotion, whether amid happiness or in misery.

[51] Dk., vol. 7, p. 441.
[52] Mkh. 40. 24, 25; Dk., vol. 7, p. 444; vol. 10, bk. 6. 31, p. 10.
[53] Dk., vol. 7, p. 441.
[54] Dk., vol. 9, p. 641.
[55] Dk., vol. 6, p. 390.
[56] Dk., vol. 8, p. 489.
[57] Dk., vol. 3, p. 179.
[58] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 126, p. 33
[59] Dk., vol. 10, bk. 6. 28, p. 9.

Man shall not serve him because he fears him, but because he loves him. The devout shall not remember him in need, and forget him in plenty; nor shall he pay homage to Ormazd in the temple, and bend his knees to Ahriman outside.

The Holy Spirit. Spena Menu is the Pahlavi equivalent of the Avestan Spenta Mainyu, or the Holy Spirit, and occurs especially in the great Pahlavi work Dinkart as the divine attribute of Ormazd. Instances may, however, be cited in which the Holy Spirit, here as in the Gathas, seems to have been regarded as a being separate from Ormazd.[60] Like the Younger Avestan texts, the Dinkart speaks of the creation of the Holy Spirit.[61] He is the source of all virtue, as his rival Gana Menu or Ahriman is the originator of vice.[62] The good qualities of man that make him righteous are derived from him.[63] To know Spena Menu, is to reach him,[64] and the devout person who is in spiritual communion with the Holy Spirit prospers in this world.[65] When a man is possessed of the power of Spena Menu, he is able to rout the Evil Spirit,[66] but when he sinfully puts out the Holy Spirit from his person, he exposes himself to the danger of being overpowered by the arch-fiend.[67] Spena Menu warns man of the temptations of the Evil Spirit, and inspires him with pious thoughts.[68]

Vohuman, the genius of wisdom, and also the innate wisdom, are the products of Spena Menu,[69] and it is the Holy Spirit that bestows the gift of divine wisdom upon man.[70] In fact the Mazdayasnian religion itself is the innate intelligence of Spena Menu.[71]

Spena Menu will ultimately triumph over the wicked Gana Menu,[72] and banish evil from the world.[73]

[60] Dk., vol. 2, p. 120; vol. 4, p. 194; vol. 5, pp. 297, 328.
[61] Vol. 5, p. 325; vol. 8, p. 442.
[62] Dk., vol. 5, p. 348.
[63] Dk., vol. 5, p. 341.
[64] Dk., vol. 8, p. 442.
[65] Dk., vol. 5, pp. 328, 340; vol. 8, pp. 441, 442.
[66] Dk., vol. 4, pp. 208, 209.
[67] Dk., vol. 2, p. 108.
[68] Dk., vol. 4, pp. 250-252.
[69] Dk., vol. 3, p. 158.
[70] Dk., vol. 8, p. 477.
[71] Dk., vol. 8, p. 474.
[72] Dk., vol. 4, pp. 252, 253; vol. 7, p. 462; vol. 8, p. 441.
[73] Dk., vol. 5, p. 326.

CHAPTER XXVII

AMSHASPANDS

The archangels. The Avestan designation Amesha Spenta, representing the highest celestial beings, now assumes the form Amshaspand or Amahraspand. With Ormazd as the president of the celestial council the Amshaspands are seven in number,[1] though occasionally Goshorun and Neryosangh are also classed among the archangels.[2] A late Pazand prayer called Shikasta-i Ṣhaitan, or the Annihilation of Satan, augments the list of the Amshaspands and speaks of them as being thirty-three in number. Ormazd has created his colleagues.[3] They are both males and females.[4] The first seven days of each month bear their names.[5] Every one of the group has a special flower dedicated to him or her.[6] Their abode is in the all-glorious, all-delightful Best Existence.[7] A later Pahlavi-Pazand work states that the seven Amshaspands have emanated one from the other, that is, the second from the first, the third from the second, and so on.[8]

Their attributes. The Amshaspands are immortal, invisible,[9] intangible,[10] of great wisdom, friendly to the good creation, the forgiving ones,[11] holy, wise, far-seeing, beneficent and intelligent.[12] Inasmuch as they owe their existence to Ormazd they are finite,[13] yet so great is their brilliance that Zaratusht does not see his own shadow on the ground when he approaches them in heavenly conference.[14]

Their work. Various are the boons that the archangels give unto men.[15] Just as in the Later Avestan descriptions, they come down to the sacrifice,[16] and accept the prayers and

[1] Zsp. 21. 12; 22. 1; Dd. 43. 8, 9.
[2] SIS. 22. 14; Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 2. 21, p. 23.
[3] Bd. 1. 23, 26.
[4] BYt. 2. 64.
[5] Bd. 27. 24; SIS. 22. 1-7; 23. 1.
[6] Bd. 27. 24.
[7] Dd. 74. 2; 94. 12.
[8] Jsp. 110.
[9] Dd. 74. 2; Dk., vol. 1, p. 47.
[10] SIS. 15. 3.
[11] Dd. 74. 3.
[12] Jsp., p. 110.
[13] Dk., vol. 2, p. 114.
[14] Zsp. 21. 13.
[15] SIS. 22. 1-7.
[16] SIS. 19. 7.

offerings of pious men, if performed with accuracy; but they do not grace the ceremony with their august presence when it is performed by impious persons, and with faulty recitals.[17] They dwell in the man over whom wisdom has full sway,[18] and those men alone who are blessed with superior wisdom are under their protection.[19] Three times every day they form an assembly in the fire-temples and shed good works and righteousness around for the advantage of the devout votaries that frequent the sacred places.[20] It is the will and pleasure of Ormazd that mankind shall propitiate them, and Zaratusht is commissioned to exhort mankind so to do.[21] Ormazd further tells the prophet that the recital of their names is good, the sight of them is better, but to carry out their commands is best.[22] Man should be quick to speak the truth, ever thinking that the invisible archangels are standing by his side to watch him.[23] Ormazd confers with them in regard to creating Zaratusht on earth, and they help the godhead in this great work.[24] They rout the demons,[25] and join naturally in lending assistance to Tishtar in his struggle with Apaosh.[26] They successfully conduct Zaratusht through the three ordeals in heaven—the first by fire, the second by molten metal, and the third by the knife. All the symbolic bearing of these tests they explain to him as the veritable trials to prove the steadfastness of the faithful when called upon in troublous times to vindicate the truth of the religion.[27]

The great change wrought in the concept of the function of the Amshaspands, in contradistinction to Gathic and Later Avestan times, is that their work of guarding the concrete objects of the world receives greater attention than their prime work of enforcing the abstract virtues which they personify. In the Pahlavi period they have severally been assigned the work of guarding seven worldly creations, man, animals, fire, metal, earth, water, and plants.[28] The text just cited goes further and

[17] SIS. 9. 10.
[18] Dk., vol. 3, p. 159.
[19] Dk., vol. 8, pp. 462, 463.
[20] SIS. 20. 1; Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. 301, p. 15.
[21] SIS. 15. 30.
[22] Zsp. 21. 18.
[23] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 91, pp. 5, 6.
[24] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 2. 19-35, pp. 22-26.
[25] Bd. 30. 29.
[26] Dd. 93. 13, 14.
[27] Zsp. 21. 24-27.
[28] SIS. 13. 14; 15; 5.

asserts that each Amshaspand has produced his own creation.[29] These objects are the counterparts of the Amshaspands, and their propitiation is equivalent to propitiating their spiritual masters.[30]

Vohuman

His materialization. Ormazd is the father of Vohuman, or Good Mind, who is the first, after the godhead, in the entire creation,[31] and therefore standing next only to Ormazd himself.[32] Vohuman is intangible,[33] but is depicted as assuming the form of a man when he is commissioned by Ormazd to hold a conference with Zaratusht about the new faith. The prophet sees Vohuman coming from the southern regions.[34] The archangel seems to be of as great height as three men's spears and he holds a twig, the spiritual symbol of religion, in his hand.[35] Another text speaks of him as coming in the form of a handsome, brilliant, and elegant man, of nine times the height of Zaratusht, clad in rich, shining clothes.[36] When Vohuman escorted Zaratusht to the council of the Amshaspands, the prophet saw that Vohuman took only nine steps to cover as much space in walking as he himself did in ninety steps.[37] The pure, white garment, the sacred shirt of the faithful, is designated as Vohuman's raiment.[38]

He protects Zarathusht from the time of the prophet's birth, and helps him in his prophetic work. Ormazd consults Vohuman together with Artavahist about the appropriate time of sending Zaratusht to the world, and Vohuman accordingly works miraculously to facilitate the birth of Zaratusht.[39] He enters into the reason of the infant,[40] and makes the child laugh immediately at birth.[41] When Ahriman lets loose the fiends to

[29] SIS. 15. 4.
[30] SIS. 15. 6.
[31] Bd. 1. 23; Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 38. 6, p. 274; Dk., vol. 1, p. 34.
[32] Dk., vol. 9, pp. 572-574.
[33] SIS. 15. 3.
[34] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 3. 51, pp. 47, 48.
[35] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 3. 52, p. 48.
[36] Zsp. 21. 8.
[37] Zsp. 21. 12.
[38] Dd. 39. 19; 40. 2.
[39] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 2, 17, 19, 24-26, 29, 33, pp. 22-26.
[40] Zsp. 20. 3.
[41] Zsp. 14. 12; Dk., SBE. vol. 47, bk. 5. 2. 5, p. 123.

destroy the babe, Ormazd sends Vohuman to save it.[42] The archangel hastens to the home of Zaratusht, and dispels Akoman, whom he finds there.[43] When the child prophet, according to the fable, was put in the den of wolves by the wizards, Vohuman, with the help of Srosh, took a sheep full of milk at night and suckled the child.[44] The Gathas refer to Vohuman's coming to Zaratusht in order to impart to him enlightenment. We have in the Pahlavi texts the details of their meeting and their conversation. On being questioned by Vohuman as to his most ardent desire, Zaratusht declared it to be righteousness,[45] and Vohuman even conducted him into the celestial council.[46] Ormazd, as the Pahlavi writings record, sent Vohuman along with the other Amshaspands to the court of Vishtasp in order that they might testify to the truth of the sacred mission of the prophet.[47] The archangel is the friend of Zaratusht.[48]

Vohuman's functions. He was one of the bearers of religion from the Deity to Siamak, the son of the first human pair.[49] He co-operates with Tishtar in pouring down rain on the earth.[50] He, as a divine aid, helps man to perform meritorious deeds.[51] It is the duty of Vohuman to record the doings of men three times every day, and to keep account of their thoughts, words, and deeds.[52] As the recorder of the actions of mankind in the material world, he naturally appears in connection with the celestial assize which takes account of the doings of the souls when they proceed to the next world after death.[53] When the pious soul approaches heaven he welcomes it, and assigns its place and reward in paradise.[54] Vohuman gives reward to him who practises virtue, and teaches mankind to refrain from sin.[55] It is Vohuman who pictures the final good at the Renovation to children if they turn out to be righteous, and it is for this

[42] Zsp. 14. 9.
[43] Zsp. 14. 10, 11.
[44] Zsp. 16. 9; Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 3. 17, p. 39.
[45] Zsp. 21. 9, 10; Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 3. 54-59, pp. 48, 49.
[46] Zsp. 21. 11; Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 3. 60-62, pp. 49, 50.
[47] Dk., vol. 9, pp. 615, 616; SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 4. 74-82, pp. 67-70.
[48] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 38. 12, p. 276.
[49] Dk., vol. 7, p. 457.
[50] Bd. 7. 3; Zsp. 6. 3.
[51] Dk., vol. 8, p. 446.
[52] Dd. 14. 2.
[53] Dd. 31. 11.
[54] Dd. 31. 5; Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 8. 44. 78, p. 164.
[55] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 47. 15, p. 306.

reason that children who are innocent are always cheerful.[56] At the time of the renovation of the universe man will profit through the friendship of Vohuman,[57] and it is Vohuman who ushers in the Messianic benefactors, and brings Hoshedar, Hoshedarmah, and Soshyos into conference with Ormazd.[58] Vohuman will smite forever his adversary Akoman, the demon of evil thought, at the final restoration of the world.[59]

Goodness and wisdom abound in man when he welcomes Vohuman as his guest. Ormazd tells Zaratusht that the one who welcomes Vohuman learns the distinction between the ways of good and of evil.[60] Reverence for Vohuman brings submission to virtue, and man thereby detects his inner tendency to evil and sin.[61] Through the possession of Vohuman he comes to a better understanding of good and evil,[62] and the possession of Vohuman serves to explain to him Vohuman's true nature.[63] The man who loves Vohuman and his wisdom learns the discrimination between good and evil and thus gratifies Ormazd.[64] The creator has put Vohuman in man's body to withstand Akoman.[65] He resides in the human conscience, and imparts wisdom;[66] and when he is lodged and treasured there in the heart of the faithful, he increases man's knowledge of religion.[67] Light, purity, perfume, and the archangels are in the man who welcomes Vohuman as his guest,[68] and that individual in whom Vohuman predominates is rich in contentment, and receives praise in both the worlds.[69] Peace and righteousness prevail, when one's will is ruled by Vohuman. Whoever entertains this celestial being as his guest purifies his own thoughts, words, and deeds;[70] and the man that has Vohuman as his guest becomes staunch in virtue.[71] The lover of Vohuman spreads instruction

[56] Dk., vol. 8, p. 439.
[57] Gs. 158.
[58] Phl. Ys. 28. 9.
[59] Bd. 30. 29.
[60] Dd. 7. 7.
[61] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 53 33, pp. 335, 336.
[62] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 31. 14, p. 248.
[63] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 51. 10, pp. 320, 321.
[64] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 54. 6, pp. 341, 342.
[65] Dk., vol. 9, p. 625.
[66] Dk., vol. 8, pp. 480, 481.
[67] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 50. 14, pp. 313, 314.
[68] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 67. 4, p. 382.
[69] Dk., vol. 3, p. 159.
[70] Dk., vol. 1, pp. 27, 28.
[71] Dd. 3. 14; Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 47. 16, pp. 306, 307.

of virtue in the world.[72] Anyone, furthermore, who speaks words of virtue sacrifices unto Vohuman.[73] In order that Vohuman may dwell in man, every vestige of evil thought should be destroyed. When he has taken his seat in man, wrath disappears; but when man indulges in this vice, Vohuman departs from him.[74] Sin flees away where Vohuman resides;[75] but prosperity, good reputation, and piety ensue where Vohuman has his dwelling-place in man.[76] Vohuman is besought to grant wisdom and good thoughts.[77] Man is exalted by imbibing the superior knowledge of Vohuman,[78] and wisdom comes through the friendship of Vohuman.[79] The archangel preserves intelligence in man,[80] and endows him with wisdom.[81]

On the material side Vohuman is the patron divinity of animals. In the creation of this world, cattle are placed under the care of Vohuman.[82] The true follower of Zaratusht nourishes and feeds them, protects them from oppressors, and delivers them not over to cruel tyrants; it is such a one that propitiates Vohuman;[83] for cattle are the counterparts of Vohuman, and he who is good to them reaps the benefit of both the worlds.[84] Vohuman, accordingly, asks Zaratusht in his conference with the prophet to maintain the species of certain classes of animals in the world.[85]

Artavahishit

His zeal for the protection of fire now supersedes his primal work of guarding righteousness. Artavahisht is the Pahlavi form of the Avestan name read as Asha Vahishta, and really preserves the older form, Arta. Righteousness, over which this archangel presides, remains still in the Pahlavi period the cardinal word of the religion, but this divine personality is less frequently mentioned in connection with the abstract virtue than in connection with fire, the physical object which is under his tutelage. Fire is his earthly counterpart, and whoso procures

[72] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 63. 9, p. 372.
[73] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 52. 3, p. 323.
[74] Sg. 8. 128, 129.
[75] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 193, p. 69.
[76] Dk., vol. 6, pp. 410, 411.
[77] SIS. 22. 2.
[78] Dk., vol. 6, pp. 413, 414.
[79] Dk., vol. 6, p. 357.
[80] Dk., vol. 3, p. 152.
[81] Dk., vol. 8, pp. 471, 472.
[82] SIS. 13. 14; 15. 5.
[83] SIS. 15. 9, 10.
[84] SIS. 15. 11.
[85] Zsp. 22. 6.

wood and incense for the fire by honest means propitiates him.[86] For that reason, Artavahisht in his conference with Zaratusht commissions the sage to teach the people of the world not to ill-treat fire.[87] Ormazd has given him sovereignty in heaven, with the power of refusing admission therein to those who have displeased him.[88] The Dinkart tells us that he excluded the soul of the mighty hero Kersasp, because, despite his great heroic works by which he had saved the world from the atrocities of monsters, he had once extinguished fire.[89] The Shayast-la-Shayast incidentally records that Artavahisht is invisible.[90]

His work. He accompanies Vohuman to protect Zaratusht when he was born, and when he became a prophet, the archangel goes to the royal court of Vishtasp as an envoy of Ormazd to convince him of the divine nature of the seer's mission.[91] Ormazd sends through him also a cup of immortal drink to King Vishtasp to enlighten that monarch with spiritual vision.[92] We can see, therefore, why Artavahisht is implored to grant understanding and intelligence.[93] When a sick person is healed, the spiritual debt is due to Artavahisht.[94] He is the mighty power that will smite his adversary Indar at the Renovation.[95]

Shatravar

Once the genius of the Divine Kingdom of Ormazd, but in the Pahlavi period the guardian spirit of the mineral kingdom only. The abstract virtue of sovereign power which this archangel personified is unknown throughout the Pahlavi literature, his activity being now mainly restricted to metal, which is placed under his guardianship.[96] When Shatravar confers with Zoroaster in heaven he advises him to teach mankind to

[86] SIS. 15. 5, 12, 13.
[87] Zsp. 22. 7.
[88] Sd. 11. 5.
[89] Dk., SBE., vol. 18, pp. 369-382; vol. 37, bk. 9. 15. 3, 4, p. 199.
[90] SIS. 15. 3.
[91] Zsp. 23. 7; Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 2. 17, 19, 24, 25, 29, pp. 22-25; 4. 75, 78, pp. 67-69.
[92] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 4. 84-86, pp. 70, 71.
[93] SIS. 22. 3.
[94] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 8. 37. 14, p. 116.
[95] Bd. 30. 29.
[96] Bd. 30. 19; SIS. 13. 14, 39; 15. 5.

make good use of metals.[97] Metals are the special product of Shatravar, and those who desire to profit in both the worlds through the propitiation of this genius of those elements should not give gold and silver to the wicked, or make any ill use of them.[98] It is said that the best way of such propitiation of the divine personage is to be pure and unsullied of heart, so that even if one is subjected to the ordeal of the molten metal and the burning liquid is poured on his breast, one may not burn and die like a sinner, but may come out of the trial as successful as the great Sasanian Dastur Adarbad, who felt as if milk were being poured on his breast when he voluntarily submitted himself to this test for the good of the religion.[99] As the lord of the hidden treasures of the earth Shatravar is asked to grant wealth;[100] and in the final battle between good and evil he will assail his adversary Sovar and destroy him.[101]

Spandarmad

Her work. She gives bodily strength and vigour unto man,[102] and has the lodgment in man's will.[103] Any one who entertains her as his guest becomes truly devotional.[104] The advice of this female archangel is that one should consult a good man, when one is in doubt as to good or evil deed, for, just as the swiftest horse sometimes requires a whip and the sharpest knife a whetstone, so even the wisest man needs counsel.[105]

As the genius of earth,[106] Spandarmad rejoices when the faithful cultivate waste land and rear cattle upon it, or when a virtuous son is born upon it.[107] But she is grieved when a robber or a tyrant treads over her sacred face.[108] Even as a mother carrying her dead child in her bosom is in grief and sorrow, so does Spandarmad suffer when wicked persons trample on her breast.[109] The genius of earth trembles like a sheep that sees a wolf, when the corpse of a wicked one is interred in her.[110] When a corpse is buried in the ground she is shocked, as when one discovers a serpent or a scorpion in his bed.[111] Even walk-

[97] Zsp. 22. 8.
[98] SIS. 15. 18, 19.
[99] SIS. 15. 15, 17.
[100] SIS. 22. 4.
[101] Bd. 30. 29.
[102] Dk., vol. 9, p. 582.
[103] Dd. 94. 2.
[104] Dk., vol. 10, bk. 6. 78, p. 22.
[105] SIS. 10. 27, 28; Sd. 85. 3.
[106] BYt. 2. 8, 16, 31, 48, 53; SIS. 13. 14.
[107] SIS. 15. 24.
[108] SIS. 15. 22.
[109] SIS. 15. 23.
[110] Sd. 65. 5.
[111] Sd. 33. 2.

ing with bare foot upon the ground injures her.[112] The faithful who wish to propitiate her should propitiate both the earth and virtuous women.[113]

Spandarmad in the Pahlavi period takes up a new function which was not hers in the earlier times. She becomes the guardian of virtuous women, as intimated in the close of the preceding paragraph.[114] Whoever desires to propitiate her, should propitiate the virtuous women;[115] and through her intervention men pray for noble wives.[116] When a faithless wife of a righteous husband has her abode on her earth, Spandarmad is in sore distress.[117] He will rout his adversary Taromat at the Renovation.[117a]

Khurdad

The giver of daily bread. On the material side this archangel has water for his special care,[118] and Zaratusht is commissioned by this archangel to advocate good use of it in the world.[119] As water gives fertility to the land and is the source of prosperity, Khurdad is taken as the possessor of plenty and prosperity, and is invoked by the pious to bestow these gifts upon mankind.[120] Food and drink are his gifts.[121] It is said that the daily bread which every one obtains in this world throughout a year is apportioned in the celestial world on the day Khurdad of the first month of the Zoroastrian calendar and the archangel intercedes in behalf of those who have propitiated Khurdad by their deeds, and that these offerings thus secure for the faithful a larger share in this annual allotment of earthly riches.[122] Those who make proper use of water rejoice Khurdad and receive rewards in both worlds;[123] but those who are guilty of its misuse or defilement find their way to heaven blocked up by the spirits that preside over water.[124] In addition the Pahlavi writings record that an unseasonable chatter and an immoderate drinking of wine distress him.[125] Khurdad will drive away his adversary, the demon Tairev, at the time of Resurrection.[126]

[112] Sd. 44. 1.
[113] SIS. 15. 20.
[114] SIS. 15. 5.
[115] SIS. 15. 20
[116] SIS. 22. 5.
[117] SIS. 15. 22.
[117a] Bd. 30. 29.
[118] SIS. 9. 8; 13. 14; 15. 5.
[119] Zsp. 22. 11.
[120] SIS. 22. 6.
[121] Dk., vol. 7, p. 461.
[122] Sd. 52. 2, 3.
[123] SIS. 15. 25, 29.
[124] SIS. 15. 27, 28.
[125] Mkh. 2. 33, 34; 16. 49, 56.
[126] Bd. 30. 29.

Amardad

Amardad confines his activity to guarding the vegetable kingdom, and does not represent immortality, which is his prerogative. This divinity works in the vegetable kingdom that belongs above all to him,[127] and helps those who work for the plant world.[128] Food and drink are in his care.[129] Like his comrade Khurdad, Amardad refuses a passage to heaven to those who sin against plants, and do not expiate the wrong.[130] The prophet is requested by him to enjoin rules for the preservation of plants.[131] He will banish Zairich from the world in the final struggle.[132]

[127] Bd. 9. 2; Zsp. 8. 1; SIS. 9. 8; 13. 14; 15. 5.
[128] SIS. 15. 25, 29.
[129] Dk., vol. 7, p. 461.
[130] SIS. 15. 27, 28.
[131] Zsp. 22. 12.
[132] Bd. 30. 29.

CHAPTER XXVIII

IZADS

The angels. Izad is the Pahlavi equivalent of the Avestan word Yazata, and is similarly employed as the designation for an angel. These angels are immortal and invisible;[1] and some of them, who were pre-eminently the genii of the living in the Younger Avestan period, have by this time been transferred more particularly to the sphere of the dead. For example, Srosh, Rashn, and Mihr, three of the most prominent Izads of the Avestan period, have changed their sphere of activity. In the Avestan period they were the genii exclusively of the corporeal world, but now they are converted into the judges of the dead. In the Pahlavi time, the faithful, rather than looking to them for protection and help in this world, solicit more especially their favour for the next world. Srosh still retains some of his earthly functions, but he becomes the genius of the dead first, and of the living afterwards. The angels Hom and Din have extended their sphere of activity by joining Tishtar in his work of producing rain.[2] Certain qualities that were attributed in the Avestan texts to one angel are now loosely ascribed to another.

The Izads are the loving guides and protectors of men. They first expounded the faith of Ormazd to Gayomard, the primeval man;[3] and they are ever ready to fulfil the behests of Ormazd, who has created them for the welfare of his creatures.[4] They most frequently visit the sacred temples consecrated to the fire Bahram.[5] They help man,[6] and instruct him in goodness.[7] It is through their aid that man learns to know God, to dispel demons, and to liberate his soul from the future torments of hell.[8] Man's knowledge of them enables him to enter into relationship with his creator;[9] for he is unable to progress morally

[1] Dk., vol. 1, p. 47; vol. 2, pp. 65, 66, 114.
[2] Bd. 7. 3; Zsp. 6. 3; Dk., vol. 3, p. 146.
[3] Dk., vol. 7, p. 457.
[4] Dk., vol. 3, p. 170.
[5] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 230, p. 87.
[6] Dk., vol. 1, pp. 44, 45.
[7] Mkh. 52. 15.
[8] Dk., vol. 2, p. 85.
[9] Dk., vol. 2, p. 81.

without their assistance.[10] If man remembers them, he receives their favour and prospers in both worlds.[11] Through their wisdom, moreover, he becomes illustrious,[12] and attains to spiritual wealth through them.[13] They hasten to help the man who practises righteousness and abstains from wickedness;[14] such a man wins their favour by invoking them.[15] It was for this very reason that the prophet Zaratusht prayed to them to grant him the power of spiritual leadership.[16] They keep off Druj from the body of man, and guard him against the miseries of both the worlds.[17] As a physician removes bodily illness, or as a farmer cleans corn of all impurity, so do the angels remove harm from man.[18] They keep up this relation with man as long as he practises goodness, but they give up his company when he falls into sinful habits.[19] They lodge in the body of a righteous person, causing him joy,[20] and instruct the faithful in spiritual matters;[21] moreover, sin flees from him in whom they dwell.[22] They help and protect a pious man, even as a loving master would lead a calf to the pasture land and prevent it from going to a place of harm.[23] Like loving parents who prohibit their children from partaking of some unwholesome food, the angels prevent man, even against his will, from doing that which they foresee, through their superior knowledge, to be of eventual harm to him.[24] Persons who befriend the righteous in this world find angels as their friends in the next;[25] the good leave name and fame here, and are blessed with the company of the angels there.[26]

Sacrificial offerings made to the angels. We have already seen that meat formed a conspicuous article among the sacrificial gifts made to the heavenly beings in the Avestan period. Meat viands are the special feature of the sacred feast during the Pahlavi period. The Pahlavi treatise Shayast-la-Shayast explains what particular parts of a slaughtered animal are to be specifically dedicated to the various divinities in ceremonies. The angel Hom's right to receive the tongue, jaw, and left eye,

[10] Dk., vol. 4, p. 249.
[11] Dk., vol. 7, p. 454.
[12] Dk., vol. 7, p. 488.
[13] Dk., vol. 7, p. 490.
[14] Dk., vol. 2, p. 65.
[15] Dk., vol. 7, p. 454.
[16] *Ib.*
[17] Dk., vol. 8, pp. 475, 476.
[18] Dk., vol. 1, pp. 38, 39.
[19] Dk., vol. 1, p. 26.
[20] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 97, pp. 12, 13; 236, pp. 90, 91.
[21] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 214, p. 79.
[22] Dk., vol. 3, p. 153.
[23] Dk., vol. 13, bk. 6. E. 1, p. 1.
[24] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 222, p. 83.
[25] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 133, pp. 38, 39.
[26] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 140, pp. 41, 42.

recognized by the Avestan scriptures, remains still undisputed.[27] The head and neck, shoulders and thighs, loin and belly, kidneys and lungs, liver and spleen, legs and tail, heart and entrails are all distributed among several different beings; until at last the tail-bone falls to the lot of the august Farohar of Zaratusht, and the great archangels have to content themselves merely with the residue.[28] Decomposed meat is not to be consecrated to any angel;[29] nor is any meat at all to be used in any ceremony for the first three days after the death of a person, but milk, cheese, fruit, eggs, and preserves are to be consecrated instead.[30] It is stated that if the relations of the deceased person were to consecrate and eat fresh meat within three days after his death, another death might perchance occur in the family.[31] Yet on the fourth day they may slaughter a goat or a sheep.[32] A short formula is to be recited by the man who slaughters this animal.[33] It is desirable that the head of a slaughtered animal should be consecrated before being eaten; but if it is not possible to consecrate the head, one kidney at least must necessarily be consecrated.[34]

In our treatment of the Izads individually, which we shall now undertake, we shall deal only with those that are discussed at any great length in the Pahlavi works.

Srosh

His activity. The whole earth, or more especially, Arzah and Savah, two of the zones, are the abode of Srosh.[35] Three times every night he comes to the world.[36] According to the Pahlavi texts, precisely as was recorded above for the Avestan scriptures, the cock and dog are his associates in routing the demons.[37] He helps the man who in the midst of temptations practises virtue;[38] for he makes his abode in the body of a righteous person; and the man in whose body he is a guest becomes the more polite in his utterances of welcome.[39] Again we see Srosh inspiring an intelligent man to speak good words, as also an unintelligent one who listens to the teachings of the

[27] SIS. 11. 4, 6.
[28] SIS. 11. 4.
[29] SIS. 10. 34.
[30] SIS. 17. 2; Sd. 78. 1.
[31] Sd. 78. 2.
[32] SIS. 17. 5.
[33] Antia, *Pazand Texts*, p. 178, Bombay, 1909.
[34] Sd. 34. 4-6.
[35] Mkh. 62. 25.
[36] SIS. 13. 43.
[37] Bd. 19. 33.
[38] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 90, pp. 4, 5.
[39] Dk., vol. 10, bk. 6. 78, p. 21.

high-priests.[40] When the prophet child was thrown into the lair of a wolf for destruction, Srosh and Vohuman brought a sheep with udder full of milk to the den for the babe's nourishment.[41] Srosh, likewise, escorted Viraf in his journey to heaven above and to hell below; and at the time of the final restoration of the world, Ormazd will depute him with Neryosangh to arouse the sleeping hero Kersasp and fire him with the spirit to kill the accursed Zohak.[42] Srosh, in the final struggle between the angels and the demons, will smite his adversary Eshm.[43] He will then join in officiating with Ormazd in celebrating, once and forever, the final destruction of evil.[44]

A judge of the dead. Srosh is one of the judges who take accounts of the souls of the dead at the Bridge of Judgment.[45] If a man, during his lifetime, performs the three nights ceremonies in honor of Srosh for the future welfare of his soul, the angel will not forsake him for the first days after his death.[46] At the dawn of the fourth day after the death of a righteous person, Srosh accordingly helps to conduct his soul across the bridge.[47] Ceremonies are therefore to be performed in honour of Srosh for the first three days and nights after death, in order that this divine helper may protect the soul from the attack of the demons during this period,[48] and may serve in its favour at the seat of judgment.[49] Specially distinct praise and reverence are to be bestowed upon Srosh, and even the names of the archangels should not be associated with him.[50] In addition, it may be noted, regarding Srosh's relation to mankind, that when children under seven years of age die, their souls accompany in the hereafter those of their parents, to heaven or hell, wherever the parents happen to be. On the other hand, invocation of Srosh in the name of the child enables its soul to separate itself from those of its parents.[51]

Mihr

Lord chief justice of the heavenly tribunal. Though retaining his appellation of being the lord of wide pastures,

[40] Dd. 3. 14.
[41] Zsp. 16. 9; Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 3. 17, p. 39.
[42] BYt. 3. 59, 60.
[43] Bd. 30. 29; Mkh. 8. 14
[44] Bd. 30. 30.
[45] Dd. 14. 4; 28. 5; Mkh. 2. 118.
[46] Sd. 58. 4, 7.
[47] Mkh. 2. 115, 124.
[48] SIS. 17. 3.
[49] Dd. 28. 6.
[50] Dd. 29. 2.
[51] Sd. 47. 1-3.

Mihr [52] no longer appears as a pastoral divinity; neither is he seen driving in his chariot to the battlefield as a war angel. He has chosen a quieter realm of work, and now occupies a seat in Ormazd's privy council in heaven. He administers justice at the heavenly court, and is one of the celestial judiciaries that make up the reckoning of good and evil deeds of the souls at the Bridge of Judgment.[53] All mankind has to appear before this lord of truth and justice.[54] In his trial of the dead, as the ancient divine personage presiding over truth, he exposes those guilty of breach of promise.[55] Great is the distress of every soul at the Bridge, but Mihr saves those souls that have belonged to truth-speaking persons.[56]

Morning time is the proper time for the ceremonials to be performed in honour of Mihr;[57] and the old idea has never been lost, that none should lie unto him.[58] That law remained ever supreme.

At the time of Renovation Mihr will help Peshyotan, who has lain asleep, tradition repeats, from ancient times only to help in confounding the Evil Spirit, who will flee back to the darkest recess of hell.[59]

Rashn

He holds the balance of judgment in the celestial court. This Izad of the Avesta, who traversed all earthly regions and presided at the ordeals, in regard to mankind, is transferred in the texts of the Pahlavi period to the celestial world. As genius of truth, Rashn now sits in the heavenly tribunal for judging the souls of the dead.[60] He holds in his hands the golden balance and weighs the good and evil deeds of the souls.[61]

A sacred cake is consecrated to Rashn, as an angel, on the

[52] Av. Mithra.
[53] Dd. 31. 11; Mkh. 2. 118; Sd. 1. 4; 18. 16; 100. 2; AV. 5; AnKhK., 5.
[54] Gs. 169.
[55] Dd. 14. 3.
[56] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 20. 4, p. 210.
[57] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 9. 7, pp. 183, 184.
[58] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 20. 5, p. 210.
[59] BYt. 3. 32-36.
[60] Dd. 14. 4; 31. 11; Sd. 1. 4; 18. 16; 58. 5; 100. 2; Dk., vol. 5, pp. 280, 281; AnKhK. 5.
[61] Mkh. 2. 118, 119; AV. 5. 5.

dawn of the fourth day after the death of a person.[62] The proper period to commemorate him is at dawn.[63]

Khurshed

His message to mankind. Man should invoke this personification of the sun three times every day. He should completely resign himself to Ormazd, and expiate his sins; he should also daily interrogate his own self as to whether he has lived that day in the pious service of Ormazd or in the accursed bondage of Ahriman.[64] Khurshed delivers three messages of Ormazd every day to mankind. In the first, or the message of the morning, Ormazd desires that mankind be zealous in doing meritorious deeds, so that, by Ormazd himself, their condition in this world may be made better. Secondly, at noon, men are reminded to marry and have children; and are likewise exhorted to co-operate with each other in doing good deeds that will prevent Ahriman and his brood from freeing themselves out of bondage until the day of resurrection. In the third, or evening message, mankind are reminded to repent of sins they may have unconsciously committed, as in that case they would be forgiven.[65] One should reverence the sun during the day, for not to do so is sin.[66] It is proper to invoke it even if it is not visible owing to cloudiness;[67] otherwise by not thus reverencing it, the good works that a man does that day lose their value for him.[68]

Tishtar

He retains his position as the genius of rain. The Pahlavi writers reproduce the account of Tishtar's fight with Aposh from the Avestan Yasht 8, which celebrates his work.[69] The Yasht spoke of the help that Ormazd gave Tishtar when he was routed in his first combat with his adversary and invoked the Supreme Being for help and strength. The Dadistan adds that besides Ormazd the archangels and the guardian spirits also carried

[62] Dd. 30. 2; SIS. 17. 4.
[63] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 9. 6, p. 183.
[64] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 227, p. 86.
[65] Gs. 154-157.
[66] SIS. 7. 1, 3.
[67] *Ib.*, 5.
[68] SIS. 7. 6.
[69] Bd. 7. 3-10; Zsp. 6. 3, 4, 9-11, 13.

help to him.[70] Vohuman, Ardvisur, Vat, Hom, and Din are spoken of as his associates.[71] Tishtar seizes rain water from the ocean,[72] carries seeds of plants with it and scatters them all over the world. This angel of rain removes the hot winds that parch the dry lands and spreads prosperity all around by means of his fertilizing waters.

[70] 93. 13. [71] Dk., vol. 3, p. 146. [72] Mkh. 62. 41, 42.

CHAPTER XXIX

FAROHARS

The Farohars have existed long before the world came into being. Farohar, or Fravahar, is the Pahlavi form of the Avestan Fravashi. The Pahlavi works do not speak of the Farohars of Ormazd and his heavenly ministers; in the writings of this period, the Farohars are confined to the earthly creatures. Every single good creature of this world has its own Farohar.[1] Ormazd created them long before he brought the universe into existence; and they actively worked by the creator's side, when he fortified the sky against the attacks of Ahriman. Mounted on horses and with spears in hands they patrolled the boundaries of the rampart of heaven.[2] At the beginning of the world Zaratusht's Farohar was shown to Goshurun, the Spirit of the Universe, to console her that in the fulness of time the prophet would be sent to the world to remove the iniquity that was rampant on earth.[3]

They volunteer to descend to earth and stand by men to the end of their lives. From the beginning of time the Farohars lived in supreme felicity in the empyrean realm, along with Ormazd and his heavenly host.[4] When Ormazd created man, as the climax and crown of his earthly creation, the deity asked these spiritual intelligences whether they would wish to stay in heaven under his constant protection, or migrate to earth in human bodies and encounter the foe, fight with him valiantly, vanquish him in the flesh and return triumphant to God for the eternal reward. The Farohars accepted the latter alternative, and prepared themselves to face the attack of Ahriman.[5] Thus the Farohars, who were seated in heaven and were conscious of the beatific vision of Ormazd, prefer the voluntary exile for a time in the world of joy and sorrow, of good and evil, in order

[1] Mkh. 49. 23.
[2] Bd. 6. 3; Zsp. 5. 2.
[3] Bd. 4. 4.
[4] Dk., vol. 2, p. 80.
[5] Bd. 2. 10, 11.

to win forever the uninterrupted bliss of heaven. Thus it is, that they tenant human bodies and temporarily adopt the material vehicles for the express purpose of routing evil and redeeming the world from its imperfections.

In the Pahlavi period their influence is less prominent. In the Pahlavi texts the Farohars are represented as intrusted with the work of guarding the soul of Sam,[6] and the Hom tree of immortality,[7] as well as the passage of hell.[8] Ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine of them watch over Zaratusht's seed, which will give birth to the three last saviour renovators of the world in the last three millenniums.[9] As a part of their office also they help and keep pure the elements and the sun, moon, and stars;[10] and they preserve the breath of life and energy of the body in men,[11] and keep the bodily organs in unison.[12]

The zeal with which they were approached by the living in the Avestan period has considerably abated by this time. The faithful no longer invoke them for various boons as zealously as their forebears did. The fighting armies do not call upon them for help in the thick of battles. Men do not look to them for riches and plenty; and women do not turn their eager eyes to them for easy childbirth. Their hold on humanity is weakened, and they are less in touch with the daily lives of men than before.

One of the later Pahlavi works divests the Farohars of their spirituality, and identifies them with the stars.[13] The Farohars of the renovators are spoken of as created from the body of the first man.[14]

It is for the welfare of the living that the Farohars solicit sacrifices. It is the sacred duty of the faithful to commemorate the Farohars of the dead, especially on the days set apart for that purpose.[15] The Farvardigan festival was a national institution, and the kings and people zealously observed it. A Byzantine ambassador on his way to Persia in 565 was prevented from entering the city of Nisibis for ten days while this festival was

[6] Bd. 29. 8; Mkh. 62. 23, 24.
[7] Mkh. 62. 28, 29
[8] Mkh. 49. 15, 16.
[9] Bd. 32. 8, 9.
[10] Dk., vol. 8, p. 446.
[11] Dk., vol. 6, p. 353.
[12] Dk., vol. 6, p. 409.
[13] Mkh. 49. 22.
[14] Mkh. 27. 17.
[15] SIS. 10. 2; 12. 31.

celebrated there.[16] On the fourth day after death the Farohar of the departed one in a family is to be invoked along with the Farohars of all righteous persons that have lived in this world from the time of the first man on earth, and also of those that will live up to the advent of the renovator of the world.[17] When thus invoked in prayer the Farohars come down to attend the ceremonies;[18] but if they are not properly propitiated, they wander disconsolate about their former abodes for a time and finally depart leaving their curse. Such a curse is irrevocable, if once given, unless nullified by the Farohars who uttered it.

Besides, it is not for their own good that the Farohars seek invocation, because they do not need any ceremony for their own sake; their coming, rather, is to remind the householder of the life after death, to warn him that he also will one day have to leave this world, and that when trouble comes upon him they could not help him, if he neglected them.[19] Yet, if well propitiated by the survivors of the deceased, they escort the souls of these persons, when their turn of death comes. They intercede on their behalf, give a good report to Ormazd, and entreat him to give them due reward.[20] But if the living have neglected them, and have failed to sacrifice unto them, they depart cursing, and bide their time, until the day when death brings the survivors to the Bridge of Judgment. To such souls, now stepping on the threshold of the next world, they utter reproaches and refuse help.[21]

The line of distinction between the souls and the Farohars of the dead is gradually obliterated in the Pahlavi texts. By the end of the Pahlavi period both of these spiritual faculties, namely, the soul and the Farohar, come to be considered as one and the same. The Pahlavi texts, accordingly, speak of the souls or of the Farohars, as the case may be, as coming to this world on the days originally dedicated to the latter. The Avestan texts, on the other hand, always spoke of the advent of the Farohars (not of the souls) to this world on the festival days consecrated to them at the end of every year, but the Pahlavi

[16] Menander Protector, ed. Niebuhr, p. 374, Bonn, 1829.
[17] SlS. 17. 5; Dd. 28. 7; 81. 15.
[18] SlS. 9. 11, 12.
[19] SlS. 9. 13; Sd. 13. 6-9.
[20] Sd. 37. 6-8.
[21] Sd. 37. 10-12.

works expressly speak of the souls descending to the earth on these days, as well as on the anniversaries of their bodily death.[22] A passage speaks of the souls as coming on their anniversaries, accompanied by nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine Farohars from heaven as their guests, just as men do on earth.[23]

[22] Phl. Vd. 8. 22; Sd. 37. 1-12. [23] Sd. 13. 3.

CHAPTER XXX

EVIL

Independent origin of evil. The sharp antithesis of the Avestan period between good and evil is still further intensified by the Pahlavi writers. In fact dualism reaches its consummation in this period. It is the standard philosophy, and is upheld as the only possible solution of the problem of evil. The author of the Shikand Gumanik Vijar, who is himself a dualist of the most pronounced kind, strongly urges in his polemics against other religions that good and evil can on no account have originated from one and the same source. Evil is considered to have as independent and complete an existence as good; they are both primeval. They are so entirely separate from each other that neither good originates from evil, nor evil from good.[1] Each one of them exists by itself, and entertains perpetual antagonism towards the other.[2] The pairs of opposites such as heat and cold, perfume and stench, pleasure and pain, health and sickness, life and death, and all others fall under the compass of these fundamental terms, good and evil.[3] This dualism between good and evil in the moral realm is the same as that between light and darkness in the physical world. Right is identified with light, and wrong with darkness. There has never been anything in the world which is not either good or evil or a mixture of both.[4] Besides, in all periods, evil is found to be stronger than goodness.[5] The nature of divinity is light and beauty, fragrance and purity, goodness and wisdom; for darkness and ugliness, stench and pollution, evil and ignorance are outside of his nature.[6] Ormazd is not responsible for this imperfect side of existence.

Tracing both good and evil to God deprives him of his divinity. It seems that the dualistic system is criticized by the non-Zoroastrian critics as detracting from the grandeur of the

[1] Sg. 8. 89, 102.
[2] *Ib.*, 90, 91.
[3] *Ib.*, 92-99, 101.
[4] *Ib.*, 100; 11. 158.
[5] *Ib.*, 11. 97.
[6] *Ib.*, 319, 320.

godhead;[7] but the author of this treatise retorts by arguing at length that the indispensable attributes of God, such as his goodness, omniscience, omnipotence, and the rest, demand that he could not simultaneously be the producer of good and of evil. If evil is also his creation, God is either not wholly good or he is not wholly powerful; both good and evil cannot be dependent on his will. The controversialist continues by addressing arguments to prove that Ormazd cannot be held accountable for evil without impairing some one or more of his attributes that are essential to his divinity; and whatever reflects upon even a single of his divine attributes degrades his position. We shall now see the main arguments advanced by the learned controversialist against the theory of tracing both good and evil to one and the same source.

The goodness of Ormazd demands that he could on no account be the author of evil. One of the essential requisites of the godhead is goodness. If evil arises from him as the deity, he is imperfect in goodness, and consequently could not be deserving of praise and sacrifice from men.[8] Men cannot pray to one who is partly good and partly evil. If the divine being could have averted evil from mankind, and did not so will it, he is not perfect in goodness; and a being that is imperfect in goodness is not to be glorified by men.[9] If he is perfect in goodness, he could not wish for the presence of evil, but only for its extinction;[10] for a being whose will is evil is unworthy of his divinity.[11] Such a view destroys his attribute of goodness. But Ormazd is perfect in goodness;[12] and consequently, his will being eternally good, only goodness should prevail in the world from its beginning up to its end.[13] But, the author maintains, the world shows more of evil than goodness,[14] hence evil is outside of and independent of Ormazd. Beside all that, everything in the world either happens through his will, or it does not, or there may be some things that happen through his will, and others through the will of some other.[15] If both the good and evil come to pass through his will, then his will is not perfect,[16] and the being whose will is imperfect is himself imperfect.[17] If nothing proceeds through his will, he works automatically and

[7] Sg. 12. 33, 34.
[8] *Ib.*, 11. 103-111.
[9] *Ib.*, 280-284, 315.
[10] *Ib.*, 11. 311.
[11] *Ib.*, 35.
[12] Zsp. 1. 17.
[13] Sg. 11. 339-342.
[14] *Ib.*, 36, 343.
[15] *Ib.*, 155-157.
[16] *Ib.*, 125-132, 159-162, 344-351.
[17] *Ib.*, 162.

is therefore made by some one,[18] but this is unthinkable. If some things are through his will and others through the will of some other being, God either ordains the existence of the good or the evil, for there is nothing in the world which is not the result of either of the two. If God wills good, some one else wills evil, or if he wills evil, some other being wills good.[19] Hence a power that personifies the opposing will exists,[20] and since God is goodness, the evil in the world proceeds through the will of the rival spirit, who exists independent of the good spirit.

If it is argued that Ormazd has created evil for the reason that mankind may better understand and appreciate goodness; or again, that he has created poverty, pain, and death that human beings may better understand the value of wealth, health, and life, and consequently become more grateful to God, it is as unreasonable as saying that the Deity gives poison to mankind so that they may better understand and appreciate the value of the antidote.[21] In another place, however, it is said in the Pahlavi texts that Ormazd allows Ahriman, the father of evil, to commingle with his creation for an allotted period for the experience and training of mankind.[22]

The all-wise God would not create his own adversary. Omniscience is one of the attributes requisite for divinity;[23] and in the Pahlavi period Ormazd is always spoken of as omniscient.[24] If it is maintained that both good and evil proceed from Ormazd himself, the question then arises why he, being omniscient, should have foreseen the harm that would be caused to his creation, and yet not have found it inexpedient to create, through his own will, a perverse creature that would turn out to be his adversary and cause him perpetual anxiety and sorrow.[25] If he did not foresee the evil consequences, he is not omniscient.[26] If he created this eternal foe to man for the sake of experiment, without knowing the result, then such a being is making experiments at the painful cost of the miseries of the countless generations of mankind, and is consequently not omniscient.[27]

Again it is meaningless for the wise one who is contented with his own divinity and grandeur to have produced through

[18] Sg. 164-167.
[19] *Ib.*, 168-175.
[20] *Ib.*, 176.
[21] *Ib.*, 11. 197-204.
[22] Dk., vol. 10, bk. 5. 7, p. 8.
[23] Sg. 11. 13.
[24] *Ib.*, 12. 52.
[25] *Ib.*, 11. 93, 94.
[26] *Ib.*, 9.
[27] *Ib.*, 115-117.

his own knowledge and will an enemy of mankind, who causes them misery in this and the next world.[28] A wise person always acts with a view to the good of all, and does not contemplate evil. Now evil abounds in the world. If the Lord has created Ahriman, who does good neither to him nor to his creatures, but positive harm to all, then this creative act of Ormazd is unwise.[29] Again, if God does not know the means to avert evil, he is equally unwise,[30] and an unwise God is imperfect.[31] But Ormazd is perfect in wisdom, and knows how to eradicate evil,[32] which he has not created.

Omnipotent Ormazd has not created evil. One of the indispensable attributes of God is omnipotence;[33] and the divinity of the Deity without this quality would be incomplete.[34] The independent existence of a rival spirit, which the theologians of this period so zealously maintain, is in no way considered to diminish the power and grandeur of God.[35] Inasmuch as the ultimate victory rests with the Good Spirit, and goodness is to rout evil at the end of time, the omnipotence of Ormazd is not considered to be impaired. It is emphasized in Pahlavi literature that Ormazd, who is omnipotent,[36] would on no account be the author of evil.[37] If he desired to prevent evil, but could not do so, he is impotent. The omnipotent being must be capable of performing his own will, for otherwise mankind would not adore him as the almighty Lord.[38] If he is thus capable of performing his will, and if at the same time his will is always for good and never for evil, it should come to pass that the avoidance of sin, the shunning of the path to hell, and the striving to be worthy of heaven would be manifest among all mankind according to God's will.[39] But this is not the case.[40] If the Deity is capable of performing his will, and yet does not do it, he is unmerciful and of inconstant will.[41]

Again, if the rival spirit did not exist, and if evil did not originate from him, the omnipotent creator ought to have created his creatures without blemish.[42] His mercifulness and omniscience would have demanded this from him.[43]

[28] Sg. 11. 27-29.
[29] *Ib.*, 11. 330-338.
[30] *Ib.*, 314.
[31] *Ib.*, 317.
[32] *Ib.*, 310.
[33] *Ib.*, 11. 13.
[34] *Ib.*, 15, 16.
[35] *Ib.*, 33, 34.
[36] *Ib.*, 12. 52.
[37] *Ib.*, 11. 312.
[38] *Ib.*, 288-294.
[39] *Ib.*, 295-297.
[40] *Ib.*, 298.
[41] *Ib.*, 299, 300.
[42] *Ib.*, 118.
[43] *Ib.*, 119-124.

If it is said that the adversary was created originally good by Ormazd, from whom he afterwards revolted and became evil, then it shows that the adversary possesses a more powerful will than that of the sacred being, since in that event the power of evil is thus able to break his commandment and diffuse more harm in the world than the good of the sacred being.[44] Furthermore, Ormazd, as the almighty being, should not have created an opponent who in the long run, by deluding and misleading mankind, threatened to become triumphant over him.[45] In addition, as the omniscient being, the Deity should have foreseen the consequences and not have produced a rebel for whose existence he would have to be sorry.[46] Moreover, the Evil Spirit should not, under these circumstances, be unreasonably blamed, since he has been created of so headstrong a will by God;[47] on the contrary, the Good Spirit who has created him of such perverse nature should be held accountable for the mischief that the Evil One is now doing in the world.[48]

If it is maintained that Ormazd has created disease and misfortune to give an opportunity to mankind—an opportunity to practise the virtue of mitigating these evils, and thus to be finally rewarded by eternal happiness—it means that he is not actually able to bestow happiness upon the virtuous, except by causing distress to others.[49] Again, to say that he will give recompense to the sick and needy, who have undeservedly suffered in this world, would reflect upon the Good Spirit;[50] for it shows that it was impossible for him to give these unfortunate people happiness in heaven, without first causing them misery in this world.[51] This after-nobility of rewarding after harassing does no credit to the Almighty One.[52] But, the argument continues, Ormazd has neither created Ahriman nor his evil.

From the trend of his argument we might be led to think that our author thus prefers to limit the omnipotence of Ormazd rather than ascribe to him the authorship of evil. But his contention is that inasmuch as Ahriman, who is independent in his origin, will ultimately bow the knee before Ormazd and perish at his hands, the omnipotence of the Good Spirit may be considered to be intact.

[44] Sg. 51, 95-97.
[45] *Ib.*, 85-87.
[46] *Ib.*, 88-94.
[47] *Ib.*, 245-251.
[48] *Ib.*, 257, 258.
[49] *Ib.*, 141-148.
[50] *Ib.*, 149.
[51] *Ib.*, 150.
[52] *Ib.*, 151-154.

Ormazd, the sovereign ruler, would not harass his earthly subjects by the creation of evil. If the divine being who is the eternal sovereign [53] keeps out distress, oppression, injustice from the world, and routs the enemies that threaten the peace and security of mankind, he is worthy of his divinity,[54] but if he rules as a tyrant occasioning eternal distress to mankind, he is unworthy of his divinity.[55] His title to divinity further demands that he cannot both be a good and a bad sovereign, causing happiness as well as misery unto mankind, for that would make him of a mixed individuality.[56]

Again, he could not produce evil to injure his own creatures, unless he ceases to be their friend and turns out their enemy.[57] But the creator is the friend of creation and not its enemy. He is its best ruler. Evil is introduced into his earthly kingdom by an infernal sovereign who struggles to found the Kingdom of Wickedness on earth.

Unmerited harm could not emanate from a just God. Ormazd is just, and administers justice with exactitude unto all. Now, if he is the author of evil, crime, and sin, there is no justice in his thus creating these and then enjoining that mankind shall abstain from committing them, under penalty of incurring punishment.[58] Ormazd, the writer continues, is the emblem of truth and justice even as Ahriman is the embodiment of falsehood and injustice. It is, therefore, inconsistent for a true and just being to say, on the one hand, that he hates sin and sinners, and on the other hand to produce more sin and sinners than good deeds and doers of good deeds.[59] It is not justice, moreover, to inflict unlimited punishment for a limited sin, and to cause perpetual pain and distress to his creatures for indulging in the evil which he has himself produced.[60] But Ormazd is the embodiment of justice, whereas the existence of evil is a glaring injustice to innocent humanity. Hence evil, the writer concludes, is the creation of an unjust power, that is, of Ahriman.

God, the embodiment of mercy, could not inflict evil upon his own creatures. One of the essential traits of Ormazd is his mercifulness.[61] If, then, he is merciful, why should he know-

[53] Sg. 12. 52.
[54] *Ib.*, 11. 17-19, 222, 227-232.
[55] *Ib.*, 233-238.
[56] *Ib.*, 225, 226, 239-244.
[57] *Ib.*, 217-221, 252.
[58] Sg. 11. 109, 110, 125-132, 260-263.
[59] *Ib.*, 11. 30-33.
[60] *Ib.*, 12. 41-50.
[61] *Ib.*, 11. 13.

ingly permit Ahriman to introduce misery and harm among his own creatures?[62] Mankind, even with their little knowledge, would never, of their own accord, allow the lion, the wolf, and other noxious creatures in among their young ones; why has the Lord, who is called merciful, let in Ahriman and his ribald crew of demons upon his own creation.[63] If he is capable of removing evil and yet does not do so, but, on the contrary, curses those who adhere to evil and casts them away for punishment in hell, he is not merciful.[64] Where is his divine mercy in fathering such a world of woe and sorrow?

Again, as a wise being Ormazd acts for some purpose when he creates the universe, for to act without a purpose is not worthy of the all-wise lord.[65] If he has, then, created the world for his own pleasure and for the happiness of mankind, as religion claims, why should he ever indulge in their slaughter and devastation?[66] But this is not true, for Ormazd is merciful and he does not slaughter, nor devastate, nor wish evil to his creatures; evil is, therefore, not of his making, but of some other merciless being.[67] Such is the view maintained in the treatise.

It is deemed futile to attempt to resolve Ahriman into a symbolic personification of man's evil nature. To those who put forth the theory that evil springs from the nature of man, our author asks whether it had its origin before the creation of mankind or at the same time with man.[68] If evil arose before man, he says, it must either have been created by God, or it had its independent existence.[69] If it arose after mankind through man's own making, that is, through the freedom of his own will, it means that man originated it in defiance of the imperfect will of his own creator.[70] This is setting up the will of man in opposition to the will of Ormazd. Now the sinners among mankind are punished by Ormazd. His omnipotence and mercifulness demand that he should not have thus allowed men to sin, when he wanted to punish them afterwards for having committed sin.[71] If evil originates with mankind, because mankind are created by God, then the creator is responsible for the production of evil.[72]

It is further explained, in the same Pahlavi tractate, that if

[62] Sg. 11, 8.
[63] *Ib.*, 11. 111-114.
[64] *Ib.*, 121-124, 300.
[65] *Ib.*, 103-105.
[66] *Ib.*, 106-108.
[67] *Ib.*, 12. 56.
[68] *Ib.*, 11. 177-179.
[69] *Ib.*, 180-182.
[70] *Ib.*, 183-191.
[71] *Ib.*, 192-196.
[72] *Ib.*, 258.

from outward appearance it seems that good and evil alike spring from mankind it is because mankind are not perfect in goodness.[73] As sickness and death are due to the bodily imperfection of man, so does evil originate owing to his moral imperfection.[74] The two competing propensities existing in human nature cause these imperfections.[75]

Whence this evil propensity in the nature of man? Does it originate with him? Does man load the infirmities of the flesh and the iniquities of his moral nature on the back of Ahriman and proclaim him as the source of all evil? If so, why circumscribe Ormazd's greatness by postulating this imaginary creature? But the general verdict of the Pahlavi writers is that evil is primeval in its origin; it is not relative, nor did man bring it into existence. It is enhanced when the flesh triumphs over the spirit, but it does not originate with the flesh. The father of evil is as real a personality as the father of goodness. We shall now peruse the life-story of this Prince of Darkness as narrated in the Pahlavi works.

Ahriman

The primeval source of evil. If evil exists in reality, and is neither produced by Ormazd nor by man, then the only alternative is that it must have originated from an independent source. And so it is. Ahriman, or the Evil Spirit, called in Pahlavi Gana Menu (possibly to be read as Anrak Menu, from Av. Angra Mainyu), is its originator. As we have already seen in the Pahlavi writings, man does not simply objectify the basest and vilest in his own nature under the name of Ahriman; the rival spirit is a personality. He is an independent being, and is co-existent with Ormazd.[76] He abode from eternity in the abyss of endless darkness,[77] and rushed into the world at the beginning of creation to work for its destruction, as he constantly wages war against Ormazd and the good creation.[78] He is described as dwelling eternally in darkness and gloom; and as wholly evil without goodness,[79] as the prime source of evil in the world,[80] and as the producer of sin.[81] Though it is possible for Ormazd

[73] Sg. 8. 117, 118.
[74] *Ib.*, 119-122.
[75] *Ib.*, 123.
[76] Dd. 37. 21, 26.
[77] Bd. 1. 3, 9.
[78] Dk., vol. 10, bk. 5. 4, p. 6.
[79] Zsp. 1. 17; Dd. 37. 28; Sd. 62. 3.
[80] Dk., vol. 5, pp. 324, 325.
[81] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 101, p. 16.

to drive him out of the world, it is not thought necessary to do so now until the end of time, when Ormazd has determined his final defeat.[82]

Ahriman is a spirit. As the very name of the arch-fiend indicates, he is a spirit, and as such can be thought of in the mind, but cannot be seen by the eye or grasped by the hand. Having no material existence, even the wicked souls, who are domiciled with him in hell, can only understand his nature but cannot see him.[83] The sainted priest Viraf, however, in his apocalyptic journey to hell sees him in the inferno.[84] In the beginning of creation he sprang like a snake from the sky to the earth,[85] and rushed upon the entire creation like a fly.[86] In one Pahlavi passage he is mentioned as possessing the body of a lizard,[87] though he could for his vile purposes assume the pleasing shape of a young man, as noted in the same connection. In allegorical references he is spoken of as assuming the form of a horse when subjugated by Tahmuras.[88]

Ahriman has backward knowledge. When the Evil Spirit defies Ormazd, the latter reminds him that he is not omniscient;[89] and does not, therefore, foresee his own final defeat.[90] In fact he has only after-knowledge, and knows no event that is to come. He was not even aware of the existence of Ormazd, until he arose from the abyss;[91] thus, though cunning, he is totally ignorant and blind.[92] He cannot attain to any knowledge pertaining to the Good Spirit,[93] and does not make any preparations to avert his coming downfall.[94] What scanty knowledge he possesses is evil and he will see the consequences of his ignorance at the time of Renovation.[95] He is unobservant, stupid,[96] and ill-informed.[97] He is the after-thinker. Ignorance is the parent of many evils, and Ahriman is the very personification of it.

As the arch-enemy of Ormazd, Ahriman swears vengeance upon the good creation. The Evil Spirit is the avowed enemy of the creatures of Ormazd.[98] Being of malicious nature,[99] and a

[82] Dk., vol. 10, bk. 5. 5, 6, pp. 6, 7.
[83] Dd. 19. 1, 2, 5.
[84] AV. 100. 1.
[85] Bd. 3. 11; Zsp. 2. 3.
[86] Bd. 3. 14.
[87] Bd. 3. 9; 28. 1.
[88] Mkh. 27. 21, 22.
[89] Bd. 1. 16.
[90] Dk., vol. 4, p. 258.
[91] Bd. 1. 9; Zsp. 1. 2.
[92] Bd. 1. 19; Dk., vol. 8, p. 445; Gs. 122.
[93] Dk., vol. 6, p. 416.
[94] Dk., vol. 7, p. 462.
[95] Dk., vol. 2, p. 108.
[96] Bd. 1. 19.
[97] Dk., vol. 5, p. 324.
[98] Dd. 3. 7; Dk., vol. 4, pp. 208, 270; Gs. 127.
[99] Bd. 1. 10; Dd. 37. 8, 10; Mkh. 10. 5, 10.

blemish-giver,[100] he ever wishes evil to all.[101] As the enemy of mankind, he ever strives to make man unhappy;[102] he is filled, in fact, with rancour against the entire creation; he is bent upon its destruction and never thinks, speaks, or does anything but harm to mankind.[103] Ormazd saw through his omniscience that the Evil Spirit would find scope for his work up to the time that the imperfections of the world were removed, and evil became eradicated. He therefore proposed peace to Ahriman, asking him to bring help unto the good creatures, and offering to make him in return immortal, undecaying, hungerless, and thirstless.[104] The Evil Spirit thought that it was helplessness and weakness on the part of Ormazd that had thus compelled him to proffer peace, and rejected the divine offer.[105] He then defiantly answered the Good Spirit that not only would he never bring help and praise unto the good creation, but he would ever seek to destroy it and force the creatures into disaffection to Ormazd and affection for himself.[106] Ever since this first dispute with the Deity, Ahriman has firmly adhered to his resolve, and is so absorbed in contriving the ruin of his rival's creatures that he has never rested at ease since creation began.[107] He is bent upon perverting creatures from their own nature, in order, if possible, to prevent Ormazd from bringing about the resurrection and the renovation of the world and restoring his creatures.[108] Having created evil for the ruin of the good creation, he strives to wrest the supremacy from the hands of Ormazd,[109] for the idea of revenge eats like a canker into his heart. A righteous person of firm resolve can put him to flight, for he is a coward, just as the prophet Zoroaster routed him. In the beginning of creation when Ahriman first saw the angels and their prowess he fled precipitately back to the darkness of hell;[110] when next he beheld Ormazd's creation, he became languid, and when he learnt Ormazd's design of renovation he was stupefied, and fell on his knees;[111] yet he remained

[100] Dk., vol. 5, pp. 324, 325; vol. 6, p. 421; vol. 7, p. 445.
[101] Bd. 1. 8; Mkh. 8. 23; Sg. 3. 5.
[102] Dk., vol. 7, p. 461.
[103] Bd. 28. 2.
[104] Bd. 1. 13.
[105] Bd. 1. 15; Dk., vol. 8, pp. 484, 485.
[106] Bd. 1. 14; Zsp. 1. 6, 8; Sg. 4. 12.
[107] Bd. 28. 3.
[108] Sg. 12. 72-74.
[109] Bd. 28. 1.
[110] Bd. 6. 1.
[111] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 258, p. 100.

resolute in his wicked purpose and has never ceased to vent his rage upon humanity.

When Ahriman contemplates any harm to Ormazd, it recoils upon himself, and proves of advantage to his adversary; but when Ormazd does anything for his own advantage, it turns out of advantage to himself, and in harm to Ahriman.[112] He is able to mar the doings of Ormazd, but in only so far as it does not ultimately turn out for harm to Ormazd, for the final victory rests with Ormazd.[113] It is said that Ormazd had created Yim, Faridun, and Kaus immortal, but that Ahriman rendered them mortal;[114] yet when Ahriman contrived to make the monstrous Zohak, the wicked Afrasiab, and the accursed Sikandar immortal, Ormazd did not permit him to do it, as that would have meant incalculable harm to the good creation.[115]

Ahriman lures man to destruction by deceit. He is the arch-deceiver,[116] corrupting man's nature, and beguiling him into wickedness and sin.[117] He lurks about to overtake man in his unguarded moments, and has stationed his sentinels for the purpose. Woe unto the man who is found weak in the moment of temptation. Ahriman desires that man shall not actually recognize him, for if he once appraised the Evil Spirit at his true value, he would not follow him on the path of Wickedness.[118] Ahriman seduces man to give up the religion of Ormazd and embrace his evil faith, and exults when this object is achieved.[119] Inasmuch as he does not see that his work of deception will finally bring his own ruin, he deceives himself.[120]

Ahriman produces seductive demons to pervert mankind. The first creation of Ahriman was Falsehood.[121] Afterwards he produced six chief demons, Akoman, Indar, Sovar, Nakahed, Tairev, Zairich as adversaries to the six archangels of Ormazd.[122] Besides this he produced many demons and fiends.[123] Mankind

[112] Dd. 94. 8; Dk., vol. 10, bk. 6. 12, p. 4.
[113] Mkh. 8. 24-26.
[114] Mkh. 8. 27, 28.
[115] Mkh. 8. 29, 30.
[116] Dk., vol. 1, p. 22.
[117] Dd. 37. 8; Mkh. 45. 8; Dk., vol. 8. p. 462; vol. 9, p. 624.
[118] Bd. 28. 40; Mkh. 40. 26, 27; Dk., vol. 10, bk. 6. 31, p. 10.
[119] Bd. 28. 4-6.
[120] Dk., vol. 13, bk. 6. E. 38. p. 16.
[121] Bd. 1. 24.
[122] Bd. 1. 24, 27.
[123] Bd. 1. 10.

formerly did not commit crime,[124] and there was no sin,[125] but Ahriman implanted various vices in man's nature as the enemies of the soul; among such are avarice, covetousness, anger, jealousy, stubbornness, lust, enmity, idleness, apostasy, slander, ignorance, malice, stinginess, hatred, strife, and many other seductions that mislead men.[126] Ahriman meditates upon nothing but falsehood, wrath, malice, and discord;[127] and especially does he seek to conceal from man the reward of good deeds and the retribution of evil deeds, thus leading human creatures to wickedness and sin.[128] In designing man's ruin Ahriman does not consider his triumph over him complete unless he succeeds in effecting his spiritual destruction; nor does he deem it a victory merely to deprive a man of his life and wife, child, and fortune; but he must succeed in seducing his soul.[129] Nothing satiates his voracity so much as the capture of a human soul.

Ahriman introduces disease and death into the world. When Ahriman first entered the world, he plagued mankind, and introduced death among the living beings;[130] thus misery and affliction entered the world through him.[131] And all the ills human flesh is heir to are from him. He smote the progenitor of animals and made the primeval man mortal.[132] Disease, destruction, and death are identified with Ahriman, and form his chief work.[133]

Ahriman infests the earth with noxious creatures. One of the many malicious acts of Ahriman, to thwart the creation of Ormazd, is his creation of biting and venomous creatures, such as the snake, scorpion, frog, lizard, and many others, in so great a number that the noxious creatures did not leave an empty space on earth to the size of the point of a needle.[134] Hence killing these noxious creatures and extirpating their burrows are meritorious deeds.[135]

[124] Mkh. 13. 6.
[125] Dk., vol. 6, p. 421.
[126] Bd. 3. 17; Dd. 37. 53, 54; Dk., vol. 6, p. 354; vol. 8, p. 469; vol. 10, bk. 5. 4, p. 6; Gs. 10, 11.
[127] Mkh. 10. 5.
[128] Mkh. 13. 7-10.
[129] Mkh. 46. 4, 5.
[130] Bd. 3. 17; Dd. 37. 72, 81; Dk., vol. 2, pp. 92, 93.
[131] Mkh. 37. 10; 42. 6, 7.
[132] Dd. 37. 46, 82.
[133] Zsp. 5. 4; Dk., vol. 4, pp. 233, 238; vol. 12, bk. 6. 308, p. 25.
[134] Bd. 3. 15; Zsp. 2. 9.
[135] SlS. 20. 5; Mkh. 5. 8; Sd. 43. 1-10, Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. 317, p. 29.

Ahriman disfigures Ormazd's creation. Smoke and darkness were mingled with fire by the Evil Spirit;[136] the trees that grew on the earth before the appearance of Ahriman had neither thorns, nor rough bark, nor was poison mixed with any of their species. It was Ahriman who introduced these into vegetation, also blight to wither it.[137] Thus he brings disfigurement upon the creatures of Ormazd,[138] and exultingly cries out that everything of Ormazd has been assailed by him and spoiled.[139] Over against each one of Ormazd's good creations there is balanced an evil one of Ahriman.

The end of Ahriman. One of the essential proofs of Ahriman's inequality with Ormazd is that he is not eternal. As has been noted above, although he was co-eval and co-equal with Ormazd, he is not co-eternal, because there will be a time when he will cease to exist.[140] Ormazd and Ahriman are therefore not actually balanced equally against each other. As mankind advances in righteousness, and succeeds in weakening the dominion of wickedness, Ahriman will be baffled in his vile attempts to tempt men to the wicked path.[141] Ahriman will then find his resources exhausted and will become impotent and confounded.[142] Being completely overpowered,[143] and broken,[144] predominating no longer,[145] he will become afflicted and miserable.[146] He will bow his unwilling knees to the divine authority. Thus baffled, he will flee into darkness and be fettered in hell in perpetual sorrow.[147] We are informed in another place that when he is thus defeated, he will rush back to hell,[148] and disappear.[149] Still other passages state that he will be repulsed and slain.[150] Ahriman exists in the world so long as he can find his lodgment even in one man in the world, but when, owing to the goodness of

[136] Bd. 3. 24; Zsp. 2. 11.
[137] Bd. 3. 16; 27. 1.
[138] Zsp. 4. 10.
[139] Zsp. 4. 3.
[140] Bd. 1. 3; Gs. 129; Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. 278, p. 7.
[141] Dk., vol. 1, p. 22.
[142] Dd. 37. 15, 20, 64; Mkh. 8. 13; Gs. 158.
[143] Dk., vol. 5, pp. 314, 324.
[144] Dk., vol. 7, p. 458.
[145] Dd. 7. 3.
[146] Dk., vol. 5, p. 346; vol. 7, p. 461; Gs. 157.
[147] Dk., vol. 3, p. 150.
[148] Dk., vol. 9, pp. 441, 486.
[149] Dd. 37. 71, 122; Dk., vol. 8, pp. 436, 445; Jsp., p. 109.
[150] Dk., vol. 9, p. 627; Jsp., p. 120.

men, he will be completely cast out from human bodies, he will be exterminated.[151] He will enter into nothingness.[152]

The final disappearance of evil from the world. With the disappearance of the Father of Evil, goodness will completely rout evil.[153] The great conflict between good and evil will eventually end in perfecting good and in eliminating evil.[154] Moral and physical imperfections will vanish; for vice and impiety, wickedness and sin, demons and fiends, disease and death will be no more.[155] The dual nature of the creatures of good and evil will be supplanted by the single characteristic of goodness. The evil creatures will perish.[156]

Divs

The emissaries of Ahriman. There are six arch-fiends created by Ahriman in exact opposition to the archangels; and there are also other minor demons as their evil confederates.[157] They love evil for its own sake. Hell is the specific habitat assigned to them, and from there they rush to the summit of Mount Arezur to hold their infernal council.[158] The north is believed to be the region of Ahriman and demons, just as the south is that of Ormazd and angels; and darkness is the steadfast quality of this fiendish crew.[159]

Their work. The diabolical host works for procuring success for Ahriman. They will do this up to the end of the world.[160] The strongest and most triumphant of their weapons against man is deceit;[161] they lead man to sin through it.[162] Every demon is an instigator of some evil; on that account, man should always entertain an abhorrence for the demons. He should array himself on the side of the angels, and join in the fight against the demons, who always contemplate harm to man.[163] When they

[151] Dk., vol. 8, p. 436; vol. 11, bk. 6. 264, p. 102.
[152] Dd. 37. 59, 114; Mkh. 57. 6; Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. 297, p. 13.
[153] Dk., vol. 5, p. 326.
[154] Dd. 37. 122.
[155] Dd. 37. 120, 121; Mkh. 8. 14, 15.
[156] Bd. 1. 7.
[157] Bd. 28. 12.
[158] Dd. 33. 3, 5.
[159] Dd. 37. 85.
[160] Dd. 37. 59.
[161] *Ib.*, 87.
[162] Dk., vol. 2, p. 67.
[163] Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. 307, p. 24.

have sway over man's doings, righteousness is arrested and wickedness thrives,[164] for man becomes sinful and wicked in their company.[165] They take up their abode in him when his innate wisdom forsakes him;[166] when once possessed by demons, he is possessed by evil knowledge.[167] The demons seize upon and carry off one-third of the wisdom and glory of that man who eats in the dark without washing his hands.[168] Procrastination on the part of man also helps the demons; for example, when a man is in the habit of postponing some good work from day to day, until he is overtaken by death, and the good deed remains unaccomplished, the demons are greatly rejoiced.[169] Persons who associate with the wicked in this world get demons for their companions in the next.[170] The fire of Ormazd puts the demons to flight; for, when a large number of them rushed to destroy the child Zoroaster at his birth, they could not harm him owing to the presence of the fire.[171] Zoroaster brought them all to his feet, and forced them to rush headlong into the jaws of hell. The demons will live so long as man will have something of the demon in him. When righteousness at last shall triumph in the world, and the world of humanity reach perfection at the final renovation, the demons will sink into their native darkness, and perish forever.[172]

Akoman

Ahriman's premier. As Vohuman is the first celestial being in the good creation, so Akoman, 'Evil Mind,' ranks first among the evil creatures. Ahriman first produced Falsehood and after that Akoman,[173] as a consequence of which they often work in concert.[174] Still another text speaks of Akoman and Varun as created together.[175] Akoman came out from the dark world of Ahriman;[176] and of all the fiends this demon of perversion is most to be dreaded.[177]

His attempt to enter the mind of the prophet Zaratusht when a child to pervert it is frustrated by Vohuman. When

[164] Dk., vol. 2, p. 68.
[165] Dk., vol. 3, pp. 166, 167; vol. 7, p. 459.
[166] Dk., vol. 3, p. 159.
[167] Dk., vol. 3, p. 166.
[168] SIS. 9. 8.
[169] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 89, p. 3.
[170] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 133, p. 39.
[171] SIS. 10. 4; 12. 11.
[172] Dd. 37. 20.
[173] Bd. 1. 24.
[174] Dd. 37. 53.
[175] Dk., vol. 3, pp. 158, 159.
[176] Bd. 1. 27.
[177] Dk., vol. 9, p. 625.

Ahriman learnt of the birth of Zaratusht, who was to be a sure weapon of destruction against the Kingdom of Wickedness, he sent Akoman with instructions to enter the infant's mind deceitfully and pervert it.[178] The fiend approached the house in which Zaratusht was born and contemplated entering by the door.[179] But being as stupid and ignorant as his father he was easily defeated by his own weapon of deceit being turned against him. Vohuman, who had chased him to the spot, schemingly turned back and asked him to enter the house. Akoman thought that as his rival was leaving the place, his own work was finished, and consequently returned without accomplishing anything.[180] Akoman, moreover, is generally said to frighten children at their birth with the ghastly picture of their sufferings at the Renovation, and this is given as a reason why children cry at birth.[181]

Evil thoughts in man come from Akoman. In opposition to Vohuman, Akoman gives evil thoughts to men and causes discord.[182] It is owing to those evil thoughts of his that man becomes wicked.[183] Man has to purge himself of vicious thoughts. Unless he does this, he finds himself driven hither and thither like a shuttlecock, influenced now by Vohuman, now by Akoman. The man whose will is ruled by Akoman fails to discriminate between good and evil,[184] for the friendship of Akoman makes one vicious,[185] and he who entertains Akoman as his guest turns out to be wicked.[186] Such a man courts spiritual destruction.[187] When Akoman prevails over Vohuman in the mind of a man, his intelligence becomes blunted and he loses greatness in both the worlds,[188] inasmuch as righteousness flees from him and he is steeped in sin.[189] He is even spoken of as introducing physical evil in the world,[190] even as he brings evil knowledge of religion to man's mind,[191] and makes him miserable.[192]

Druj

The change wrought in the conception of her work. This personification of wickedness and deceit has by this time lost her

[178] Zsp. 14. 8.
[179] Zsp. 14. 9.
[180] Zsp. 14. 10, 11.
[181] Dk., vol. 8, p. 439.
[182] Bd. 28. 7.
[183] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 69. 21, p. 388.
[184] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 30. 8, p. 243.
[185] Dk., vol. 6, p. 357.
[186] Dk., vol. 10, bk. 6. 78, p. 21; 87, p. 25; vol. 11, bk. 6. 193, p. 69.
[187] Dk., vol. 6, p. 410.
[188] Dk., vol. 1, p. 28; vol. 3, p. 152.
[189] Dk., vol. 1, p. 28.
[190] Dk., vol. 6, p. 411.
[191] Dk., vol. 6, p. 414.
[192] Dk., vol. 8, p. 466.

distinctive individuality, and consequently she no longer remains an exclusive rival of Artavahisht, or Best Righteousness. In fact her name is not mentioned as Ahriman's counter-creation against Artavahisht. Indar, as we shall see in the sequel, usurps her place as Artavahisht's recognized adversary. Druj no longer in the Pahlavi period stands exclusively as the class designation of the female demons, which in earlier times was her chief characteristic. The term is at times promiscuously applied to male and female demons alike; in fact it now designates demon in general. Ahriman himself is most frequently termed Druj; and several demons are simultaneously termed divs as well as drujes in one and the same text.[193] The evil passions of man are personified as drujes.[194] These abide in man to pervert his nature,[195] for Ahriman has created the drujes;[196] he is their leader,[197] and is himself the arch-druj.

Druj's work. The wicked deeds of man further the evil power of Druj in the world. When man leaves the blessed company of Ormazd, he is easily overpowered by her,[198] who makes his life miserable and full of blemish.[199] So long as he remains under her damaging influence, he cannot work on behalf of his creator.[200] Druj Nasu, the embodiment of pollution, performs her work of defilement.[201]

What puts her to flight? Recital of the holy spells, the heartfelt expiation on the part of the sinner, and the performance of righteous deeds will drive Druj out of man,[202] she flees far from a man of religious inclination.[203] It is the duty of man, therefore, to drive away the various drujes that may surround him.[204] Ormazd has endowed him with the knowledge whereby to rout them,[205] and has given him strength commensurate with his needs. The angels help to drive out Druj from the creation, an act that will contribute to furthering the work of the Renova-

[193] Bd. 28. 11, 13, 14, 20, 33.
[194] Mkh. 41. 8-11.
[195] Dd. 94. 1.
[196] Bd. 1. 10.
[197] Dk., vol. 7, p. 458.
[198] Dk., vol. 7, p. 496.
[199] Dk., vol. 8, p. 475.
[200] Dk., vol. 8, p. 473.
[201] Dd. 17. 7, 8.
[202] Dk., vol. 1, p. 5; vol. 12, bk. 6. 315, pp. 27, 28.
[203] Dk., vol. 2, p. 110; vol. 6, p. 363.
[204] Dk., vol. 11. bk. 6. 130, pp. 36, 37; SBE., 47. bk. 7. 1. 6, p. 5.
[205] Dk., vol. 4, pp. 245, 269.

tion.[206] When the world reaches the state of goodness, Druj will be impotent and perish.[207]

Indar

Transformation of a great Indian divinity into an execrated demon in Persia. In the Pahlavi texts Ahriman is represented to have created Indar as the opponent of Artavahisht.[208] In Ys. 48. 1, Druj is glossed in Pahlavi by Indar. His personality is again quite ill-defined. He does not personify Wickedness proper, as the opponent of Artavahisht should logically do in the dualistic system; but his chief business is to drive the thoughts of men from virtuous deeds, and incite them to do away with the sacred shirt and girdle.[209] He will be routed by Artavahisht in the final struggle.[210]

Sovar

Enemy of the divine Kingdom of Righteousness. The business of this demon is, by introducing tyranny and anarchy into the world, to thwart the efforts of Shatravar towards establishing the Divine Kingdom upon earth.[211] He is delighted if the faithful discard their sacred shirts and girdles.[212] He falls before his rival and perishes at the final conflagration wrought by the flood of molten metal at the end of the world.[213]

Taromat

The demon that dries up the spring of devotion in man. This demon, residing in the human will, produces disobedience,[214] and dissuades man from following the dictates of Spandarmad;[215] but he will meet with his end on the last day at the hands of Spandarmad.[216]

[206] Dk., vol. 2, pp. 111, 112; vol. 6, p. 417.
[207] Dk., vol. 7, p. 458.
[208] Phl. Vd. 19. 43; Bd. 1. 27.
[209] Bd. 28. 8, 10; Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 9. 1, pp. 181, 182.
[210] Bd. 30. 29.
[211] Bd. 28. 9.
[212] Bd. 28. 10
[213] Bd. 30. 29.
[214] Bd. 28. 14.
[215] Dd. 94. 2.
[216] Bd. 30. 29.

Naonghas

Taromat's confederate. This demon is identified with Taromat,[217] and is ranked as the opponent of Spandarmad. His Avestan counterpart is Naonghaithya. He gives discontent to creatures and is delighted when one goes without shirt and girdle.[218]

Tairev

The opponent of the archangel of perfection. The demon is the adversary of Khurdad [219] and mingles poison with plants,[220] and is rejoiced when one walks barefooted.[221] He will lie low before his opponent.[222]

Zairich

Tairev's comrade. He also poisons plants,[223] and other eatables.[224] He is the enemy of Amardad,[225] who will finally vanquish him.[226]

Astovidad

This demon of death casts his deadly noose around all. He it is who causes the painful separation of the soul from the body and brings death.[227] He casts around the necks of all that are born in this world a noose which cannot be thrown off by any one during life. But at the dissolution of the body, when the soul emerges from its prison of clay, it can shake off the halter if it is righteous, but is dragged to hell by means of this rope if it is wicked.[228] When the wicked demon Astovidad strokes a man, he causes lethargy; when he lays his hands on the sick, he makes him feverish; when he looks the victim in the eye, with his deadly gaze, he deprives him of life.[229] He was sent by Ahriman in the beginning of creation to slay the primeval

[217] Bd. 30. 29.
[218] Bd. 28. 10.
[219] Phl. Vd. 19. 43.
[220] Bd. 28. 11.
[221] Bd. 28. 13.
[222] Bd. 30. 29.
[223] Bd. 28. 11.
[224] Dd. 37. 52.
[225] Phl. Vd. 19. 43.
[226] Bd. 30. 29.
[227] Dk., vol. 10, bk. 5. 19, p. 16.
[228] Bd. 3. 22; Dd. 23. 3; Dk. vol. 7, pp. 494, 495; Gs. 141.
[229] Bd. 28. 35.

man;[230] and ever since that time he has been destroying all, and yet he knows no check.[231]

Vizarsh

Astovidad's collaborator. The demon Vizarsh (Av. Vizaresha) frightens the souls during the three nights of their stay in this world after death.[232] He sits at the gate of hell, ready to drag the wicked souls down to the infernal depths, as soon as they are sentenced to hell by the heavenly judges. When the souls approach the bridge, he contends with Srosh for their possession.[233] He casts a noose around the neck of all persons. The righteous ones are able to free themselves from it, but the wicked ones are entangled in it, and are dragged into the infernal abyss by it.[234]

Eshm

An impetuous assailant of man. This demon, Eshm (Av. Aeshma), who has no bodily existence,[235] occasions trouble in the world by contests.[236] He contrives all evil, and he attacks mankind with the sevenfold strength of a fiend,[237] and man loses his senses when Eshm overpowers him.[238] He rejoices when man disregards the admonitions of a religious preceptor,[239] and any man in whom he makes his abode acts like a thief.[240] Destruction follows where he steps in.[241] For example, through his seductiveness he made King Kaus discontented with his earthly possessions, and bred in him a burning desire for conquering the heavenly regions,[242] in which attempt to fly up to the sky he fell to his undoing. He incites Arjasp, the arch-enemy of Zoroastrianism, to invade the territories of Gushtasp, who had

[230] Bd. 3. 21; Zsp. 4. 4.
[231] Mkh. 2. 117.
[232] Bd. 28. 18; cp. Bd. Modi, *An untranslated chapter of the Bundehesh*, 2.
[233] Mkh. 2. 162.
[234] Phl. Vd. 19. 29.
[235] Mkh. 27. 37.
[236] Dd. 37. 52.
[237] Bd. 28. 15, 17.
[238] Dk., vol. 3, p. 152.
[239] Bd. 28. 20.
[240] Dk., vol. 3, p. 138.
[241] Bd. 28. 16.
[242] Dk., SBE., vol. 37, bk. 9. 22. 5, 6, p. 221.

embraced Zoroaster's faith,[243] but Arjasp's ruin followed. Terrible as was the condition of Iran when Afrasiab, and still earlier when the monstrous Zohak ruled over her destinies,[244] it would have been immeasurably worse had Eshm been the earthly sovereign.[245] When he fails to spread discord and quarrelling among the righteous, he works among the wicked to the same end, and again if defeat meets him here too, he causes strife among the demons and fiends.[246] He contests the passage of the soul to the Bridge on the dawn of the fourth day after man's death.[247] One of the Pahlavi commentators speaks of him as the antagonist of Vohuman,[248] but his special adversary is Srosh, who will smite him in the end.[249]

Aposh

Tishtar's antagonist. The Pahlavi works mainly repeat the account of this demon's encounter with Tishtar, that is, how the angel of rain fled a mile away in terror when he was first assaulted by this demon of drought, but how he later, after having begged more strength from Ormazd and received it, at last overpowered his adversary.[250] This demon struggles always to stop the rain from falling; and, failing in this, he strives to convert its flow into a cause of damage.[251] Aposh is the chief cause of drought,[252] but the evil eye of the greedy rulers and false judges falling on the rain, prevents its fall;[253] and in this act Spenjhagra, another demon, joins with him.[254]

Jeh

A powerful demoness. Ahriman has created the menses in women; and Jeh is the demoness of menstruation. She is so powerful that her very look smites as nothing else could do.[255]

[243] Dk., SBE., vol. 47. bk. 7. 4. 87, p. 72.
[244] Dk., vol. 7, pp. 454, 455.
[245] Mkh. 27. 34-36.
[246] Dd. 37. 104.
[247] Mkh. 2. 115, 117.
[248] Phl. Vd. 19. 43.
[249] Bd. 30. 29; Mkh. 8. 14.
[250] Bd. 7. 8-10; Zsp. 6. 9-11.
[251] Dd. 93. 12.
[252] Bd. 28. 39.
[253] Dk., vol. 3, p. 148.
[254] Bd. 7. 12; 28. 39; Dk., vol. 3, p. 148.
[255] SIS. 3. 29.

When Ahriman first saw man, Ormazd's best creation in the world, he was confounded; and coward as he is, he fell prostrate bewailing. His evil confederates tried all in their power to give him courage, but to no purpose, until finally Jeh, by her beguiling devices, succeeded in reclaiming him from impotency and dejection.[256]

The inmates in the house of ill-fame are her creatures. It is at her promptings that they bring upon earth this darkest curse that blights human life.

Other Demons

The author of the Bundahishn tells us that every single demon is accompanied by many more, and it would be tedious to enumerate them all here. They are certainly very numerous, and much of their defiling nature is mingled up in the bodies of men.[257] In fact, there are as many demons as the sins that man commits.[258] The following are the demons and fiends who are mentioned in the texts, but about whom nothing special is known. They are: Mitokht and Arast (falsehood), Arashk (malice), Bushasp (sloth), Uda (chattering while eating), Zarman (decrepitude), Akatash (perversion), Oshtohad (excessive winter), Chishmak (disaster), Varun (lust), Sej (decay), Az (avarice), Niyaz (distress), Nas (defilement), Push (stinginess), Friftar (seducer), Spazg (slander), Aighash and Sur Chashmih (evil eye), But (idol), Kundak (wizard), Kashvish (revenge), Drivish (poverty), Daiwish (deceit), Nung (shame), Paitish, Dadani, Frazisht, Nizisht, and Safle.

[256] Bd. 3. 1-7. [257] Bd. 28. 37, 38. [258] Bd. 28. 43.

CHAPTER XXXI

LIFE AFTER DEATH

Death is the completion of life. The faithful is warned, in the Pahlavi texts as in the Avesta, that he should always remember the transitory state of earthly existence, the death of the body, and the responsibility of his soul;[1] for, in the end, the body will be mingled with the dust, but the soul will survive; and man should therefore labour for the future welfare of the soul.[2] Death is the completion and perfection of life.[3] It is not an extinction of individuality, but a transfer from one state to another; it is the transition of the soul to a higher life, in which it gives up one duty to take up another.[4] Death brings the dissolution of the body, the earthly elements are dispersed, and the spiritual elements accompany the soul, which now proceeds to the next world to render the account of its deeds.[5] The body served as the garment of the soul as long as the soul wore it during life, but when it is outworn the soul flings it behind it. The body is likened, in more than one Pahlavi passage, to a house, of which the soul is a tenant; for when the body is divested of vital power and falls to the ground, the master of the house leaves it to crumble into dust.[6] Just as a rider becomes helpless without his saddle and his weapons to overthrow his enemy, so does the soul lose all hopes of routing the Druj, when the body perishes; for the soul is the lord of life and conducts the battle between good and evil.[7] It is the master of the body.[8] The body becomes useless and perishes when the soul leaves it.[9]

Man should not put his trust in the possessions of this earth; his happiness is but the passing cloud of a rainy day; riches and wealth, titles and honours, distinctions of birth and race—all will be of no avail when death will at last come upon him.[10]

[1] Mkh. 18. 3.
[2] Mkh. 1. 22, 23; AnAtM. 105.
[3] Dk., vol. 5, p. 330.
[4] Sg. 4. 87; 12. 79.
[5] Bd. 17. 9; Sg. 4. 88-92; Dk., vol. 6, p. 359.
[6] Dd. 23. 6; AnAtM. 142.
[7] Dk., vol. 6, p. 354.
[8] Dd. 3. 8.
[9] Dk., vol. 3, pp. 150, 175.
[10] Mkh. 2. 98-110.

Body is the lineament of man; he should not mistake it as his real self. Whoso moulds his actions with the higher object of the welfare of his soul gains this world by leaving good name and fame behind him, and obtains the next as his reward; but the slave to passions and evil desires, who lives solely for the body, loses both this world and the next as well.[11] The body of the one is lean in this world, but his soul is fat in heaven, whereas a man who pines after bodily pleasures is fattened in body in this world, but his soul is hungry and lean in the next world.[12] There is a remedy for everything, but not for death.[13] A man may live a hundred years in this world, but death will at last overtake him.[14] Then at last he will sleep in the deep silence of death. The closed eyes will not open; the heart will not throb; hands and feet will not move; and the prince and peasant will leave the world in exactly the same manner.[15] The body will then be removed to its final resting-place, where go the great and the small, the master and the servant, the righteous and the wicked alike.[16]

A man may avoid the danger of tigers and wild beasts, of robbers and inimical persons, but he cannot live without fear of the demon of death.[17] He is helpless when death swoops down on him. Some die at an early age, almost as if they had never been born, and even those that live long have ultimately to quit the world.[18] Life is short in this world, but long in the next.[19] Man should practise such good deeds during his lifetime that on his death-bed he should think it would have been better had he done even more of them, and avoid such acts for which he would have to wish during the last moments of his life that they had not been performed.[20] The individual who has been indifferent in his devotions to the Lord is distressed when death approaches and thinks of him the more.[21]

Srosh's help indispensable for the disembodied souls. At death the soul shakes off the fetters of the body. This severance of the soul from the body is fraught with momentous difficulties for the former. As an infant that is just born in this world requires care from a midwife and others, so does a soul

[11] Mkh. 21. 10.
[12] BYt. 2. 56.
[13] Dk., vol 12, bk. 6. A. 6, p. 37.
[14] AnAtM. 139.
[15] AnAtM. 143.
[16] AnAtM. 145.
[17] Dk., vol. 7, pp. 452, 453.
[18] Gs. 165.
[19] AnKhK. 5.
[20] Dk., vol. 10, bk. 6. 17, p. 6.
[21] Dk., vol. 5, p. 279.

that has just emerged from the body require help and protection against evil influences. It is said that the righteous Srosh acts at this juncture as a midwife to the righteous soul in its bewilderment, and does not let it go into the clutches of Ahriman.[22] It is therefore deemed advisable to secure the services of this angel even in advance by propitiating him with rituals during the lifetime of the individual. But if that has not been the case, his relatives should never fail to offer sacrifices in his honour immediately after death and continue them for the three days and three nights that the soul stays in this world after death.[23] Besides watching and protecting the soul at this critical period, Srosh is also one of the judges who will then take account of the soul. It is indispensable, therefore, to order ceremonies to be performed for Srosh during the time that the soul tarries in this world before embarking on its celestial journey.[24]

The souls visualize the good or bad deeds of the lives they have just completed. In conformity with the statement of the Avestan texts, the Pahlavists also depict the human souls as hovering about the head of the dead for three nights after death, experiencing joy or grief, according as they have lived in righteousness or wickedness.[25] It is stated that during the first night satisfaction from their good thoughts comes to the souls and vexation from their evil thoughts, during the second night satisfaction from their good words and vexation from their evil words, and during the third night satisfaction from their good deeds and vexation from their evil deeds.[26] The demon Vizarsh struggles with the souls during this period.[27] The souls experience as much pleasure or pain during these nights as they have had during their whole life on earth.[28] The soul of the wicked person, over whose head hangs the coming retribution, now wishes that it could re-enter the body for some time in order to make up for the faults and shortcomings of the life that it has just finished.[29] As a rider requires a horse, so the soul needs a body,

[22] Sd. 58. 7.
[23] Dd. 28. 5; SIS. 17 3; Sd. 58. 5, 6, 8, 9.
[24] Dd. 28. 6.
[25] Bd. Modi, *An untranslated chapter of the Bundehesh*, 2; Mkh. 2. 114, 156-160; Dd. 20. 2; 24. 2; 25. 2; AV. 4. 9-14; 17. 2-9; Hn. 2. 2-5; 3. 2-5.
[26] Dd. 24. 4; 25. 4.
[27] Bd. 28. 18; Modi, *op. cit.*, 2.
[28] Hn. 2. 6, 11, 16; 3. 5, 10, 16.
[29] Dd. 16. 4.

without which it is unable to act in this world.[30] It now discovers, when it is too late, that it has lost the opportunity and worked all the while for naught. It feels as if it had thrown away all good deeds either into the fire to be burnt or into the water to be drowned instead of practising them and storing them up for its own merit.[31] It wishes it had enjoyed less in the world below and practised virtue more,[32] and it realizes too late that the most precious period of its earthly life is now lost beyond recovery.

The souls escorted by the genii of their own deeds to the other world. At the end of the third night when the dawn breaks, the souls undertake their memorable journey with the co-operation of the good angels Srosh, Vae the good, and Varhran; in the midst of the opposition of Astovidat, of Vae the bad, Frazisht, Nizisht, and Eshm. When the souls pass from the midst of the sweet-scented trees, if they are righteous, or from among foul-scented trees, if they are wicked, they meet their conscience, the righteous soul beholding her in the form of a beautiful damsel, personifying the store of its own good works, but the wicked soul seeing a hideous woman, typifying the store of its own evil deeds.[33] In addition to the escort of the angelic figure or the fiendish apparition, the Dinkart and some copies of the Bundahishn mention that a beautiful fat cow and a fair garden, as well as this damsel, are met with by a righteous soul, while an ugly, lean cow and a barren desert, besides the hideous hag, are encountered by a wicked soul.[34] The description of the celestial journey and of the happenings on the way, as found in the Menuk-i Khrat, differs a little from the other works. These, in agreement with the accounts in the Avestan texts, depict the soul as meeting its daena prior to its crossing the bridge, but Menuk-i Khrat brings her on the scene after the soul has passed the bridge. Besides, the pious soul is made to converse on the way with Srosh, which is not the case in the other texts.

The heavenly judges. The Pahlavi works give us an elaborate account of the way in which justice is administered to the

[30] Dk., vol. 6, pp. 380, 381.
[31] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 219, p. 82.
[32] Dk., vol. 11, bk. 6. 211, p. 78.
[33] Bd. Modi, *op. cit.*, 5-7; Dd. 24. 5; 25. 5; Mkh. 2. 115, 127-181; AV. 4. 15-36; 17. 10-26; Dk., vol. 2, pp. 82, 83; Hn. 2. 19-32; 3. 17-20.
[34] Bd. Modi, *op. cit.*, 5, 7; Dk., vol. 2, p. 83.

souls after death. The reckoning takes place on the dawn of the fourth day.[35] Throughout the entire life of mortals it is the duty of Vohuman to note down three times each day the good and evil deeds of everyone, both men and women, in the book of life.[36] Mihr, Srosh, and Rashn sit as judges in the hereafter to take account of the souls that approach the bridge.[37] Unlike the human judges who base their decisions on the biased or fallible evidence of the witnesses for the plaintiff or the accused, the divine judges need only to scan with their spiritual eyes the record kept by an archangel, and then to acquit or sentence the souls accordingly.[38] Rashn holds the balance in his hands and weighs the good and evil deeds of the souls so impartially that the scales do not turn wrongfully, even by a hair's breadth in favour of a righteous man or of a wicked, of a lord or of a king, but work equally in case of the peasant and the prince.[39] Injustice and partiality have no place in this celestial court, which is administered with stern but exact equity.[40]

Location of the Bridge of Judgment. All the righteous as well as the wicked souls have to proceed to this bridge for judgment, where the account of the souls takes place.[41] The bridge rests on the peak called "the peak of justice," situated in the middle of the world in Iranvej, and is of the height of a hundred men. The two extremities of the bridge rest on the northern and southern ridges of Mount Alburz.[42]

The bridge provides a wide passage to the pious souls, but confronts the wicked with its sharp edge. The bridge is guarded by the angels and the spiritual dogs.[43] It is broad as a beam and has many sides. Some of these are twenty-seven reeds in width or nine spears or nine javelins or even a league in width, whereas the others are as sharp as the edge of a razor.[44] The bridge is so arranged that it presents its broad side when a righteous soul passes over it, and gives it an easy passage, but puts forward its thin edge when a wicked soul attempts to cross

[35] Dd. 13. 2; 20. 3; Gs. 133.
[36] Dd. 14. 2.
[37] Dd. 14. 3, 4; Mkh. 2. 118.
[38] Dk., vol. 7, p. 451.
[39] Mkh. 2. 119-122.
[40] Sg. 4. 98, 99.
[41] Bd. 12. 7; Mkh. 2. 115; Gs. 133; AnAtM. 139, 147.
[42] Phl. Vd. 19. 30; Bd. 12. 7; cf. Modi, *op. cit.*, 1; Dd. 21. 2.
[43] Bd. Modi, *op. cit.*, 1.
[44] Bd. Modi, *op. cit.*, 1; Dd. 21. 3, 5; Mkh. 2. 123; AV. 5. 1.

it.[45] The pious soul is helped by Srosh, Atar, and by its own conscience to cross the bridge and go to its destination, but the impious one falls headlong into hell.[46] A passage adds that the fire Frabag smites the darkness and enables a pious soul to pass over the narrow edge in the form of fire.[47] Furthermore, Vae, the angel of wind, takes such a soul by its hand and escorts it to its proper place.[48] Of all the wicked souls the one of a malicious man finds it most difficult to cross the bridge, for malice is a sin which does not affect the sinner only, but generally abides in a lineage.[49] The wicked soul complains that it would prefer being cut by a sharp knife or pierced by an arrow to its being obliged to cross the terrible bridge.[50]

Insane persons and children are not accountable for their own deeds, but their parents are responsible. All those that are mentally unsound and also children are not held responsible for their deeds, but are considered eligible for paradise.[51] We are further told in another passage of the Pahlavi texts that the children accompany their parents either to heaven or hell as the latter have deserved.[52] The children that have thus entered hell with their wicked parents are separated from them if due ceremonies are performed in honour of Srosh by their relatives, and may then proceed to heaven.[53]

The method of administering justice in the heavenly tribunal. The ordinary way of judging the souls is said to be that of weighing the good and evil deeds in a scale and deciding to which of the two sides the scale turned. Roughly speaking, if the good deeds exceed the evil, the soul is entitled to go to heaven.[54] But if the evil deeds preponderate, the soul is assigned to go to hell.[55] The side of the balance that outweighs the other even by a hair of the eyelash determines the fate of the soul accordingly.[56] If the good deeds are in weight three Srosho-

[45] Bd. Modi, *op. cit.*, 10; Dd. 21. 5, 7; 85. 7.
[46] Bd. Modi, *op. cit.*, 10, 11, 13; Dd. 20. 4; 21. 7; 25. 6; 34. 3, 4; Mkh. 2. 124; AnKhK. 5.
[47] Bd. Modi, *op. cit.*, 9.
[48] *Ib.*, 11.
[49] Mkh. 21. 19.
[50] Bd. Modi, *op. cit.*, 14.
[51] Dk., vol. 2, pp. 89, 90; vol. 3, p. 144; vol. 4, pp. 189, 190.
[52] Sd. 47. 2.
[53] Sd. 47. 3.
[54] Mkh. 12. 13; SIS. 6. 2-4; Sg. 4. 93, 94.
[55] Mkh. 12. 15; Sg. 4. 95, 96; AV. 6. 10.
[56] Sd. 2. 3, 4.

charan more than the evil deeds, the soul attains to heaven;[57] if the evil deeds exceed the good ones by three Sroshocharan, the soul is doomed to hell until the time of the Resurrection.[58] An infidel is saved from hell if good deeds are one Tanapuhar weight more than his evil deeds.[59]

The author of the Dadistan texts takes a more rational view and asserts that it is not simply the preponderating good or evil deeds that score off their opposite, so that the soul receives recompense or retribution on the residue, but that every single good or evil deed is taken into account separately and receives its recompense or retribution in accordance. Thus a righteous soul whose preponderating good deeds have entitled it to heaven does not escape a temporary punishment for the few misdeeds that stand on its account. Similarly the wicked soul that is doomed to hell for its evil deeds has at least a few good deeds to its credit, and consequently receives temporary enjoyment severally for these before it is sent to perdition for its wrongs.[60] In other words, the righteous soul may have a few misdeeds for which it has not atoned, and will therefore undergo a corresponding punishment after death before it is admitted to the company of the righteous,[61] and the same is logically true of the soul of the sinner. The sins usually accounted for at the bridge are those that have not been expiated during the lifetime of the individual.[62] Those that are already atoned for in this world are not laid to his charge hereafter, but stand cancelled in the book of life, and no account is taken of them at the bridge.[63] We find, however, in another place that such a soul does receive a temporary punishment at the bridge, but is spared the future tortures of hell.[64]

Heaven

The graduated heavens. The division of heaven, or the celestial realms, into several mansions of Paradise, as recognized in the Avesta, remains unaltered in the Pahlavi period. Heaven in general is designated Vahisht, Paradise, but the divisions of heaven into the domains of Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds, with the highest heaven Garotman,

[57] Phl. Vd. 7. 52; SIS. 6. 3; AV. 6. 9.
[58] Phl. Vd. 7. 52.
[59] SIS. 6. 6.
[60] Dd. 13. 4; 24. 6.
[61] Phl. Vd. 7. 52.
[62] Dd. 24. 5.
[63] Dd. 13. 2, 3.
[64] Dd. 41. 8; Sd. 45. 10.

make up the four chief heavens.[65] Endless Light and Best Existence are variants frequently used for Garotman.[66] The several heavens of the celestial world are also known after the names of their locations in space, and are then called the heavens of the Star Region, the Moon Region, the Sun Region, and that of Endless Light.[67] A distinction is generally made between the lower heavens and the highest heaven.[68] If one's good deeds are three Sroshocharans more than his evil deeds he goes to Vahisht, or heaven, but if they are only one Tanapuhar in weight more than his misdeeds the soul goes to the Best Existence.[69] With the same idea it is said that when ceremonies are not performed for the good of the soul, it goes to heaven, but when performed it ascends to the highest Garotman.[70]

If the good deeds are in excess the righteous soul goes to heaven on the dawn of the fourth day, but if, in addition to the stock of this virtue, he has chanted the Gathas, and thus has extra merit to his credit as a true believer, he then is transported aloft to Garotman.[71] Vohuman welcomes such a righteous soul, and announces, at the command of Ormazd, its place and reward.[72] The same archangel thereupon offers the sanctified spirit a cup of ambrosia to drink,[73] and the righteous souls that are in heaven greet it with joy and pleasure.[74]

Location of heavens. The concept of the next world, which was abstract and spiritual in the Gathic and Later Avestan periods, gradually becomes concrete and material. The separate heavens as well as hells retain their names which designate abstract virtues as Good or Evil Thoughts, Words, and Deeds, but they are now in reality completely materialized. Different heavens are located in different parts of the cosmos, and a sharply defined boundary line divides them from one another. The separate heavens begin with the Star Region.[75] The first heaven,

[65] Hn. 2. 33, 34; Mkh. 2. 145, 146; 7. 12; 57. 13; AV. 7. 1; 8. 1; 9. 1; 10. 1.
[66] Dd. 1. 3; 14. 7; 34. 3; SlS. 10. 26.
[67] Bd. 12. 1; Dd. 34. 3; Mkh. 7. 9-11; Dk., vol. 7, p. 461.
[68] Bd. 12. 1; 30. 27; Dd. 14. 7; 24. 6; 31. 4, 15, 17, 22, 25; 34. 3; Sd. 80. 11.
[69] SlS. 6. 3.
[70] *Ib.*
[71] Dd. 20. 3.
[72] Dd. 31. 5.
[73] Phl. Vd. 19. 31.
[74] Dd. 31. 9.
[75] Dk., vol. 9, p. 626.

of Good Thoughts, is represented as extending from the stars to the moon; the second heaven, of Good Words, commences from the moon and reaches the sun; the third, of Good Deeds, extends from the sun to the lower limits of Garotman, and the last, or the highest Garotman, the Best Existence, the abode of Ahura Mazda, is in the regions of the Endless Light.[76]

Nature of heaven. Heaven is exalted, resplendent, most fragrant, and most desirable.[77] It possesses all light, all goodness, all glory, all fragrance, and all joy.[78] It has comfort, pleasure, joy, and happiness that are higher and greater than the highest and greatest comfort, pleasure, joy, and happiness in this world. It is devoid of want, pain, distress, and discomfort,[79] and it is luminous, full of charm and full of bliss.[80] Just as anything that is unlimited, imperishable, inconsumable, and everlasting is greater than that which is limited, perishable, passing, and consumable, so is the felicity of heaven greater than that of this world.[81] The supremest happiness and pleasure in this world could not bear comparison with the eternal felicities of heaven.[82] Sweet-scented breezes, like that of basil, continually blow in paradise, spreading fragrance everywhere.[83] The grandeur and beauty are such that the souls have never seen anything so exquisite in the material world. It is the residence of Ormazd, the archangels and angels, and of the Guardian Spirits as well as the most blessed among mankind.[84-85]

Condition of the souls in heaven. The souls in paradise move and perceive, and feel like the angels and archangels; they are undecaying, undying, unharmed, untroubled, full of glory, joy, pleasure, and happiness; and enjoy the fragrant breeze as sweet as the basil.[86] The radiance and brightness of the souls in heaven are like the stars and the moon and the sun, and they sit on the golden thrones and carpets.[87] The beatified souls are attired in clothings embroidered with gold and silver, and are seated on golden thrones, with golden carpets and richly adorned cushions. Those of women are bedecked with jewelry, and

[76] Mkh. 7. 9-12; AV. 7-10.
[77] Dd. 26. 2.
[78] Dk., vol. 3, p. 136; AV. 15. 21.
[79] Dd. 26. 3.
[80] Dk., vol. 9, p. 626.
[81] Dd. 26. 5; 31. 23, 24.
[82] Dd. 31. 22.
[83] Mkh. 7. 15.
[84-85] Dk., vol. 2, p. 80.
[86] Mkh. 7. 13-17; 40. 30.
[87] AV. 7. 2, 3; 8. 7; 9. 3, 4.

those of warriors with golden arms and equipment studded with jewelry.[88]

Celestial food. The food that is given to the souls of the righteous ones in heaven as soon as they enter its gates is the ambrosia, the spiritual food of the angels themselves.[89]

Duration of heavenly bliss. The souls that have ascended to heaven enjoy happiness, and remain full of glory forever and ever.[90] This state continues up to the day of Resurrection.[91]

Hamistagan

The intermediary place between heaven and hell. It is situated between the earth and the starry regions.[92] According to the belief current in the Pahlavi period, which dates back to far more ancient times, there is provided a place for those particular souls in whose case the balance trembles evenly between good and evil at the bridge, owing to the exact counterpoise between righteousness and sin in the scale into which they have cast their deeds in the present life.[93]

The condition of its inmates till the final day of the Renovation. The place of the Hamistagan resembles this earth.[94] The souls that are transported to this place have no other sufferings than cold and heat.[95] Exposed to the inclemency of weather, they shiver in winter and frost and are scorched in the tropical summer up to the day of Resurrection.[96] Beyond that, however, the Pahlavi texts speak of no other suffering, and their final fate is postponed till the universe is restored at the last day of the general restoration of the world.

Hell

Graduated hells. Corresponding to the four heavens or a fourfold division of heaven, the texts mention four principal hells. These are the Evil Thought Hell, Evil Word Hell,

[88] Mkh. 2. 154, 156; AV. 12. 2, 3, 7, 9, 14, 16; 13. 1, 2; 14. 7-9, 14; 15. 9.
[89] Dd. 31. 12-14; Mkh. 2. 152, 156; Hn. 2. 38, 39.
[90] Mkh. 2. 157; 7. 17; 40. 30.
[91] Dd. 31. 25.
[92] Mkh. 7. 18.
[93] Phl. Vd. 7. 52; Bd. Modi, *op. cit.*, 15; SIS. 6. 2; Dd. 20. 3; 24. 6; 33. 2; Mkh. 12. 14; Dk., vol. 9, p. 626; AV. 6. 7, 11.
[94] Bd. Modi, *op. cit.*, 13.
[95] Mkh. 7. 19; AV. 6. 12.
[96] AV. 6. 6, 11, 12.

Evil Deed Hell, and the Worst Existence of Darkness.[97] Sometimes the grades of hell are vaguely spoken of without any definite number.[98]

Location of hell. The abode of the sinners is in the middle of the earth,[99] down below the Chinvat Bridge.[100] It is in the northern regions, as in Avestan times it was also believed to be, and below the surface of the earth, with its gate on the ridge Arezur, where the demons hold their fiendish council.[101]

Description of hell. Hell is deep and dreadful, dark and stinking, vile and grievous, cold and stony, devoid of joy and pleasure, of comfort and happiness, and full of pain and punishment, filth and stench, misery and torture.[102] It is coldest beyond description in one place and hottest in another and is full of noxious creatures, stench, and darkness.[103] It is traversed by a gloomy and dreadful river filled by the tears shed by men for their departed ones.[104] The depth of hell is such that its bottom cannot be reached by a thousand cubits,[105] and it is tenanted by the demons, fiends, and the souls of the damned.[106]

Ahriman greets the wicked souls in hell with scorn and mockery. No sooner is the terrible sentence pronounced upon those destined for perdition than Vizarsh and other demons pounce upon the wretched souls of the sinful and put them in heavy chains, and, beating them and mercilessly torturing them, drag them down to hell.[107] The wretched souls now repent of their sins and exclaim that it would have been better for them if they had not been born upon the earth.[108] The angels give them up to the charge of the demons, their own conscience deserts them, and thus forsaken and forlorn, they lament and weep, shout and shriek, gnash their teeth and tear their hair, mutilate their limbs and lacerate themselves, making moan, and soaking the ground with a torrent of tears. But all in vain. Unavailing are their cries

[97] Mkh. 2. 182, 183; 7. 20, 21.
[98] Bd. 11; Dd. 20. 4; 33. 3-5; Dk., vol. 8, p. 448.
[99] Bd. 3. 27.
[100] Bd. Modi, *op. cit.*, 1; Dk., vol. 9, p. 626; AV. 53. 2, 3.
[101] Phl. Vd. 3. 7; Bd. 12. 8; Dd. 33. 5.
[102] Bd. 28. 47; Dd. 27. 2-5; 33. 2; Dk., vol. 8, p. 449; vol. 9, p. 626; AV. 54. 1.
[103] Mkh. 7. 27-31.
[104] AV. 16. 2, 7.
[105] AV. 54. 3.
[106] Dk., vol. 3, p. 135.
[107] Dd. 32. 4-7; Mkh. 2. 164.
[108] Dk., vol. 5, p. 279.

and lamentations, for the denizens of heaven seem to be under the spell of the drowsy fiend, Bushasp, who has lulled them to sleep, and the righteous souls in heaven seem to have grown callous and indifferent to the pangs of their former earthly associates. In this frightful condition there is no one to pity them, and none to cast a look of mercy on them in their disconsolate condition on the way to the infernal realm. Writhing in suffering and sorrow, they now enter hell,[109] and with the fourth step of the downward descent to perdition they approach Ahriman, who addresses them with ribald mockery, saying in scornful banter that it is strange they preferred the gloom and misery of hell to the joy and happiness of heaven,[110] revolted from the will of Ormazd, whose bread they ever ate, and practised the evil of the Evil Spirit.[111] The demons and fiends incessantly rail at the wretched souls and finally hurl them headlong into the darkest abyss.

Punishments and retributive justice. The souls are generally punished by the particular demon or demons in conformity to whose will the individual has sinned in this world.[112] These fiends take a cruel delight in torturing the souls for the very sins that they themselves had instigated. The degree of the suffering is exactly proportioned to the transgression, and the form of punishment meted out corresponds in the same manner to the various crimes committed in this world. We may select only a few instances from the elaborate list of Viraf. The one that has slain a pious man is himself killed over and over again in hell as a punishment.[113] He who has eaten unlawfully without saying grace starves eternally of hunger and thirst.[114-115] The merchant who used false scales and sold adulterated goods on earth must day and night in hell measure bushels full of filth and then devour them.[116] A tyrant king is tortured by being flogged by demons with darting serpents.[117] A liar and a slanderer have their tongues ever gnawed by noxious creatures.[118] The law

[109] Mkh. 2. 165, 166.
[110] Mkh. 2. 184-186; 7. 23-25.
[111] AV. 100. 2-5.
[112] Dd. 14. 6; 32. 11; Mkh. 21. 11, 16, 17, 40, 43, 44.
[113] AV. 21. 1-5.
[114-115] AV. 23. 1-9.
[116] AV. 27. 1-7; 80. 1-7.
[117] AV. 28. 1-6.
[118] AV. 29. 1-6; 33. 1-6; 66. 1-6.

obtains in hell that all demons assail their victims from the front, but the demon of slander alone attacks from the rear, because a backbiter usually indulges in secret calumnies in the absence of a person.[119] An apostate is converted into a creature with the head of a man and the body of a serpent.[120] The person who in life has defiled the fire or the water through some pollution by means of dead matter must in hell continually devour dead matter.[121] The man who withheld food from the dogs in this world has to offer them bread in plenty in the inferno, but they prefer to devour his flesh instead; nor do they give him a moment's respite.[122] The individual who has removed the boundary stones of others and usurped their lands has to pay the penalty of digging a hill with his fingers and of carrying a mountain of stones on his back.[123] One who has ill-treated cattle is ever trodden under their feet.[124] This method of inflicting punishment analogous to the sins is so systematically carried out that in certain cases where the greater portion of the body of a sinner is exposed to torture corresponding to the sin a single limb may be exempted from the punishment, because it served as the medium of doing some good. For instance, a man whose whole body was either cooked in the caldron or was undergoing some other torment had one of his legs stretched out unmolested, because he had either shoved a wisp of hay before a hungry animal that was tied and could not reach it or killed some noxious creatures with it.[125] He had not done any other good deed his whole life long.

All conceivable forms of physical torture prevail in hell. Viraf recounts the ghastly spectacle he had witnessed in the vision vouchsafed him of hell. The various kinds of most hideous tortures in hell are so dreadful that the torments and sufferings in this world dwindle into insignificance before them; and the worst of earthly calamities and inflictions present but a feeble and inadequate counterpart to their terror.[126] Nay, the memory of the miseries on earth is the only joy for the unfortunate inmates of hell in contrast to the torment they have to undergo in the inferno. Viraf relates that the souls are ever gnawed by

[119] Mkh. 2. 12.
[120] AV. 36. 1-7.
[121] AV. 38. 1-7; 41. 1-8.
[122] AV. 48. 1-7.
[123] AV. 49. 1-9; 50. 1-6.
[124] AV. 75. 1-6.
[125] SIS. 12. 29; Sd. 4. 3-11; AV. 32. 1-6; 60. 1-8.
[126] Dd. 27. 5.

snakes and scorpions, worms and other noxious creatures, flogged with darting serpents as whips in the hands of demons, suspended head downwards by one leg or by the breasts in the case of women or, again, trodden under the feet of cattle. Iron spikes and wooden pegs are driven into their eyes; they are made to stand on hot brass and compelled to lick a hot oven with their tongues. A brazen caldron is constantly boiling, and is continually fed by the tens of thousands of wretched souls flung into it. Miserable as their lot is as they are cooked, it is made still more miserable by the fact that the fire that burns them never consumes them. On earth such miserable wretches could have hope that a merciful death would release them by bringing an end to their suffering; but even that one solace is denied to the damned, for though the fire burns them unceasingly, their soul is equally eternal, and cannot therefore be annihilated.

Solitude in hell is appalling. One of the miseries that the souls have to endure in hell is its solitude.[127] The souls stand as close to one another as the ear is to the eye, but each one feels itself alone and solitary; and though the souls be as many in number as hairs in the mane of a horse, each one feels that it is lost in solitude, with no eyes to see its sufferings and no ears to hear its groanings.[128] A thousand souls are huddled together in the short space of a span, and yet every one is ignorant of the presence of others besides itself, and considers itself thrown out in the wilderness.[129]

Intensity of the darkness and stench of hell. The infernal region is the abode of all darkness.[130] The Avestan texts spoke of hell as the abode of darkness; in the Pahlavi texts the concept is intensified, and the darkness is conceived of as being so dense that it can be grasped by hand,[131] and the stench such that it can be cut with a knife.[132] All the wood in the world put on the fire would not emit a smell in this most stinking place.[133]

The foulest food served to the sinners. The most fetid, putrid, and disgusting kinds of food are given to the sinners in hell,[134] and these the wretched creatures devour in quantities, but yet remain eternally hungry and thirsty.[135] Brimstone and

[127] Dk., vol. 7, p. 495.
[128] AV. 54. 5, 8.
[129] Bd. 28. 47.
[130] Dd. 33. 4.
[131] Phl. Vd. 5. 62; 7. 22; Mkh. 7. 31.
[132] Bd. 28. 47.
[133] AV. 54. 4.
[134] Mkh. 2. 190.
[135] Dd. 32. 8, 9.

lizard,[136] poison and the venom of snakes, scorpions, and other noxious creatures,[137] blood and filth, bodily refuse and excrement, impurity and menstrual discharge, dust and human flesh, dirt and ashes, form the variety of dishes that the infernal caterer supplies to the inmates of hell.[138]

Duration of punishment in hell. Mashya and Mashyoi, the first human couple, broke the divine commandment and lied unto Ahura Mazda; they were sent to hell, and will remain there until the Renovation.[139] When a convert from Zoroastrianism to some other faith dies, his soul is sentenced to the sufferings of hell until the day of Resurrection.[140] Punishment of long duration[141] or forever and eternal suffering are the expressions most frequently met with in connection with the duration of the souls in hell.[142] This, however, refers only to the end of the cycle, the period of Renovation, when the world will be regenerated and all the sinners saved by the compassionate Lord. Ahura Mazda will not allow even the worst of the sinners to fall permanently into the hands of the Evil Spirit.[143]

The souls find the time so slowly moving and tedious that when they have passed only three days and nights in the torments of hell, or sometimes even a single day, they feel as if nine thousand years have elapsed and as if it were already time for the day of Resurrection to come and bring them release from the prison of the inferno.[144]

[136] Bd. 28. 48.
[137] Mkh. 2. 191, 192.
[138] AV. 20. 1, 2; 23. 1-3; 27. 1, 2; 35. 1, 2; 38. 1, 2; 39. 1, 2; 46. 1, 2; 51. 1, 2; 59. 1, 2; 83. 1; 91. 1; 98. 1.
[139] Bd. 15. 9.
[140] Dd. 41. 6.
[141] Mkh. 2. 186.
[142] Dd. 13. 4; Dk., vol. 2, p. 83; vol. 3, p. 141; vol. 4, pp. 264, 270; vol. 6, pp. 355, 407; vol. 7, pp. 432, 495; Mkh. 2. 193; 40, 31; AV. 64. 13; 87. 9.
[143] SIS. 8. 23; Dd. 75. 4; Sg. 4. 100, 101; 12. 59; Dk., vol. 9, p. 627.
[144] AV. 18. 11; 54. 10, 11.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE RENOVATION

Those who further the work of the final restoration. The work of regenerating the world, which was commenced by Gayomard, the first man, and was looked forward to from the time of the Gathas, will be brought to completion and perfection by Soshyos, the last saviour.[1] With Gayomard the curtain rose on the human drama. It will fall with the advent of Soshyos. Gayomard, Jamshid, Zaratusht, and all pious men who have worked for the betterment of the universe are among those that help in bringing about the final renovation.[2] The great work proceeds with greater or lesser success according as mankind are stronger or weaker in the practice of righteousness at various periods. In two of his visions the prophet sees a tree with four and seven branches respectively. The branches are made of different metals and represent the various periods of the religious history of Zoroastrianism. The first and the golden branch represents the golden age of the faith under King Gushtasp, the silver and the steel boughs symbolize a decadence, while the last, depicted by the iron branch, or age of the great catastrophe, is the period of the final overthrow of the empire, the overwhelming cataclysm that threatened to submerge the world except for the triumph of virtue and right.[3] When the mighty work of reclaiming mankind from evil is accomplished, there will follow the Renovation of the universe.[4] Those who work to bring this period nearer are said to be holding communion with Ormazd.[5]

Saviours born immaculately. Ormazd sends his special messengers at various periods of chaos and confusion to save humanity from the clutches of Ahriman.[6] This is clear in the Gathas as in the Younger Avesta. These Messianic heralds of the real truth to be embodied in the final Soshyos exemplify righteousness,

[1] Dk., vol. 1, p. 29.
[2] Dd. 36. 2.
[3] BYt. 1. 2-5; 2. 14-22.
[4] Dk., vol. 5, p. 332.
[5] Dk., vol. 7, p. 426.
[6] Dk., vol. 1, p. 29.

complete and translate the abstract teachings of religion into concrete actions that thus make the seemingly incomprehensible intelligible and tangible to the masses. The most prominent among these leaders in the last three millenniums, as noted before, are the three sons that are to be born miraculously to Zaratusht, from his seed through a supernatural conception by a maid, bathing in the waters of Lake Kans (an idea as old as Yt. 19), and the names of these three ideal promoters of mankind, as perpetuated in the forms current during the Pahlavi period, are Hoshedar, Hoshedar-mah, and Soshyos, who will appear at an interval of a millennium each.[7] It is said that Zaratusht went three times near unto his wife Hvov, and that each time the seed went to the ground. On each of these three occasions, important for mankind, the spiritual seeds were caught up by the angel Neryosangh and intrusted to the keeping of Ardvisur, the divinity of waters, and from these sanctified waters they will be born in time to come, as miraculously conceived at different periods by three virgins.[8] The advent of the all-beneficent renovators of the faith for the regeneration of the world will, as we shall see below, be attended with portents and miraculous signs.

The millennium of Hoshedar. A child is born to a virgin named Shemik-abu of the age of fifteen, who miraculously conceives Zaratusht's seed when she drinks the waters from a pool. The seed was emitted during the lifetime of Zaratusht and lay concealed in the waters until the maiden kindled the germs and became pregnant.[9] The child thus immaculately born in the first of the three final millenniums of the world is named Hoshedar, a later modified corrupt transcript of the Avestan Ukhshyat-ereta. In the first of the last three thousand years of the world, before the final renovation and the resurrection, he holds, at the age of thirty, a conference with Ormazd and receives a revelation.[10] When he returns from this divine conference, Hoshedar makes the sun stand still for ten days and nights to convince the people of the world about the authenticity of his mission.[11] During his millennium, righteousness, liberality, and all the virtues supreme will be practised by mankind more and

[7] Mkh. 2. 95.
[8] Bd. 32. 8.
[9] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 8. 55-57, pp. 105, 106.
[10] BYt. 3. 44; Dk., vol. 8, p. 485.
[11] BYt. 3. 45, 46; Dk., vol. 4, p. 247; SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 9. 2, pp. 107, 108.

more as the world slowly moves towards perfection during this aeon. Two-thirds of the people of Iran, according to the Pahlavi texts, will turn out righteous.[12] The wisdom of the religion will constantly increase,[13] the poverty of the people and the slaughter of cattle will decrease,[14] as he is the benefactor that will help to remove the wickedness of the wolfish nature in mankind.[15]

The millennium of Hoshedar-mah. A maiden named Shapir-abu is destined to approach the waters and conceive thereby, again through the second seed of Zaratusht. The virgin who has never approached man gives birth to a child who is named Hoshedar-mah, an imperfect rendering of the Avestan Ukhshyat-nemangh,[16] who confers with Ormazd.[17] At the age of thirty years he announces his advent by making the sun to stand still for twenty days and twenty nights.[18] His benign presence and Messianic power, it is destined, will destroy the wicked product of every serpentine and monster engendure.[19] Mankind greatly advances toward the realization of the final goal of perfection during this millennium. Cattle give milk in great quantities. In connection with this millennial view, it may be added, from the Pahlavi texts of this later period, that the small cattle which give milk will give milk then in redoubled quantity, and a cow will give as much milk as could be used by a thousand men. Hunger and thirst decrease, as the world reaches nearer to its perfection. A single meal will be sufficient to satisfy a man for three days.[20] Mankind will furthermore become so versed in the art of healing, and in the science of physical culture, that they will be able to withstand disease and death more successfully.[21] Humility, peace, and liberality will be now and forever more zealously practised by men.[22]

The millennium of Soshyos. The world, according to the Pahlavi texts, which carry onward the ideal teachings of Zaratusht in the Gathas as developed further in the Younger Avesta,

[12] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 9. 13, p. 110.
[13] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 9. 2, pp. 107, 108.
[14] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 9. 6-11, pp. 108-110.
[15] Dk., vol. 1, p. 49; vol. 2, p. 128; vol. 3, p. 133; vol. 6, p. 378.
[16] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 9. 18-20, p. 111.
[17] Dk., vol. 8, p. 486.
[18] Dk., vol. 4. p. 247; SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 9. 21, p. 111; 10. 2, pp. 112, 113.
[19] Dk., vol. 1, p. 49; vol. 2, p. 128; vol. 3, p. 133; vol. 6, pp. 378, 379.
[20] Bd. 30. 2; Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 10. 2, pp. 112, 113.
[21] BYt. 3. 53.
[22] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 10. 3, p. 113.

is ever striving and tending toward final betterment, and will reach perfection in the millennium of Soshyos. It needs only the final touch of this greatest of the renovators to bring about this result for the eternal welfare of the universe. Men by this time, when these millennial conditions have been reached, have ceased eating meat, and subsist on milk and vegetables.[23] Even milk, according to the Pahlavi works, is gradually given up, and water and vegetables form the only food of mankind.[24] The Bundahishn, moreover, adds that, before the Resurrection and the Renovation of the universe occur, men will give up milk, vegetables, and even water, and they will ultimately subsist without food of any kind, and yet not die.[25] Still another Pahlavi text states that during the period of the fifty-seven years of the activity of this last apostle mankind will be able to subsist for seventeen years simply on vegetables, then thirty on water alone, and for the last ten years on spiritual food.[26]

At this time, according to the texts, when the world is ripe to welcome the last of the prophets, a virgin named Gobak-abu conceives immaculately the third seed of Zaratusht in the same manner as her two forerunners had done. At the age of fifteen she becomes pregnant and gives birth to the most illustrious Soshyos in the realm of Khvaniras.[27] When the final saviour is thirty years of age, the sun stands still in the zenith of the sky for thirty days and nights;[28] through his supernal power the demoniac nature among men will be broken.[29] He will then cause the Resurrection and the future existence.[30] His body, which is as radiant as the sun, partakes only of spiritual food and he is clad with kingly glory. Around him he looks with the power of six eyes and he it is that foresees the end of the Evil Spirit.[31] He is the greatest renovator of the world.[32] He comes to restore the dead to life,[33] and to bring final perfection to the world.[34]

[23] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 10. 8, p. 114.
[24] Bd. 30. 1; Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 10. 9, p. 114.
[25] Bd. 30. 3.
[26] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 11. 4, p. 117.
[27] Bd. 11. 6; Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 10. 15-18, p. 115.
[28] Dk., vol. 4, p. 247; SBE., vol. 47. bk. 7. 10. 19, p. 116.
[29] Dk., vol. 6, p. 379.
[30] Bd. 11. 6; Gs. 133.
[31] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 11. 2, 3, pp. 116, 117.
[32] Dk., vol. 7, p. 485.
[33] Gs. 133.
[34] Dk., vol. 1, p. 29.

Any kind of wickedness that may still be lingering, in spite of his supreme beneficence, will perish through his presence.[35] The angels will enable mankind to co-operate with the great apostle Soshyos to rout Druj.[36] In advance of his divine mission to the world he has met Ormazd in conference and has received the supreme sanction for his task.[37] During the fifty-seven years of his work, he will drive out the drujes from the world,[38] and will make the world eternally happy.[39]

The collaborators of Soshyos. Ormazd has ordained that Soshyos will be helped by certain great persons who have departed from the world, but who remain immortal and are still living in the body, and are yet to exert sway. The chief among these personages, potent for the eternal welfare of mankind, are Peshyotan, Aghrerat, Parsadga, Urvatadnar, Narsih, Tus, Giv, Ibairaz, Ashavazd,[40] with a thousand others.[41] Kaikhusru will arise to help Soshyos in the raising of the dead;[42] Peshyotan, or Chitra-mahan, will lend help with his hundred and fifty disciples.[43] Still another Pahlavi passage speaks of fifteen men and fifteen woman among the living that are to come to the help of Soshyos.[44] They will all leaven the rest of mankind. Zohak, who is put in chains on Mount Demavand, shall even at the last break loose from the bonds in which he has been confined,[45] and as a monster-man will return to the world and disturb the righteous creation.[46] At the command of Ormazd, his ministers Srosh and Neryosangh approach the body of Kersasp and raise it from the dead. The hero then rises up and slays Zohak.[47] Soshyos and six of his companions, Roshn-chashm, Khur-chashm, Fradat-gadman, Varedat-gadman, Kamak-vakhshishn, and Kamak-sud, all of which names have a spiritual significance, will divide the

[35] Dk., vol. 1, p. 49; vol. 2, p. 128.
[36] Dk., vol. 2, pp. 111, 112.
[37] Dk., vol. 8, p. 486.
[38] *Ib.*
[39] Dk., vol. 9, p. 617.
[40] Bd. 29. 5, 6; Dd. 36. 3.
[41] Jsp., p. 119.
[42] Dd. 36. 3; Mkh. 27. 59, 63; 57. 7; Dk., vol. 7, p. 485; SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 10. 10, p. 114.
[43] Dk., vol. 5, p. 275; SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 8. 45, 46, p. 104; BYt. 3. 27, 29.
[44] Bd. 30. 17.
[45] BYt. 3. 55, 56.
[46] BYt. 3. 57.
[47] Bd. 29. 7-9; Dd. 36. 3; 37. 97; BYt. 3. 59-61; Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 10. 10, p. 114; vol. 37, bk. 9. 15. 2, pp. 198, 199; Jsp., pp. 118, 119.

work between them, and each of them will act in one of the seven zones.[48] Every one will miraculously communicate with the other of his six colleagues in the other zones. They will read each other's thoughts from a distance and will thus converse just as two men sitting close together would do.[49] The work of the renovation of the world will last for fifty-seven years, the number already referred to.[50] Full fifty years of this beneficent activity will be devoted to the seventh zone Khvaniras, where Zaratusht himself was the spiritual chief,[51] and where Soshyos himself is working.[52] All evil will perish during these fifty-seven years, and goodness prevail among mankind, and men will embrace righteousness and zealously practise religion before the final raising the dead.[53] Disease and death, apostasy and vice, depravity and every fiendish influence, will perish during this period.[54] The world will be restored to its primal state.

Resurrection of the dead. The preliminary work of the renovators is to raise again to life all those who have died from the time of Gayomard, the primeval man, down to the last man Soshyos, and then give them their respective bodies.[55] It is natural that the world could not at this period be quite empty of men. Those who happen to be living at the time when the period of renovation approaches near shall abstain from eating, live without food, and live so virtuously that even the offspring that are born unto them at this period will be of spiritual nature. All these, therefore, will be ready to enter the ranks of the dead who will now receive new bodies.[56]

The dead will be made to rise from the places where they had yielded up their lives in the world.[57] Zaratusht questions Ormazd in this connection, according to the Pahlavi texts, regarding the question of forming again the bodies of the dead, inasmuch as the material frames of the dead have perished and been reduced to dust.[58] Ormazd, thereupon, tells the prophet that even as it was possible for him to have created something from nothing, when nothing at all existed, and as he was able to create the sky and the earth, the sun and the moon, and the stars, fire and water, clouds and wind, grain and mankind, in fact

[48] Dd. 36. 4, 5.
[49] Dd. 36. 6.
[50] Bd. 30. 7; Dd. 36. 5.
[51] Bd. 29. 2.
[52] Dd. 36. 7.
[53] Dk., vol. 5, p. 277.
[54] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 11. 4, 5, p. 117.
[55] Dk., vol. 5, p. 332.
[56] Dd. 35. 1-4.
[57] Bd. 30. 7; SIS. 17. 11-14.
[58] Bd. 30. 4.

everything that formerly had no existence, it would not be difficult for him at the Resurrection to form anew something that had already existed.[59] The spirit of the earth, the water, the plants, and the fire will at that time restore the bones, blood, hair, life, and other materials which had been committed to them by God in the beginning, and in this manner the bodies will be formed anew.[60] And in another Pahlavi work it is said that just as it is easier to teach what once was learnt but forgotten than it is to teach that which had never been learnt, and as it is easier to repair a house than to build a new one, even so is it easier to bring to pass the restoration of the creation than in the beginning the original creation out of nothing.[61]

All those resurrected will be furnished with their bodily frames by the command of Ormazd.[62] The first body thus raised up will be that of Gayomard, the father of mankind. Then will follow the first couple, Mashya and Mashyoi, and then the rest of mankind, whether righteous or wicked.[63] Exceptions to this general statement are found in other Pahlavi texts, but the tone is in general the same. Men of demoniac nature, sodomites, apostates, and the hateful Afrasiab will not be given their bodies, for these arch-enemies of religion are no longer men, but have converted themselves into fiends and must consequently share the fate of their class.[64]

Universal judgment. A further arraignment at the judgment seat now takes place. The righteous and the wicked souls are now gathered together in one place and are subjected to the collective, or universal, judgment. Every soul at this judicial session sees its good and its evil deeds, and the wicked man becomes as conspicuous as a white sheep among the black.[65] Ormazd himself takes a final and decisive account of the souls, and pronounces definitely upon them, for he remembers in each detail the several individual judgments passed in connection with every one of the myriads of the wicked souls after their death, as well as the just.[66] From his judgment there is no appeal.

[59] Bd. 30. 5.
[60] Bd. 30. 6.
[61] Dd. 37. 5.
[62] Dk., vol. 6, p. 359.
[63] Bd. 30. 7.
[64] SlS. 17. 7; Dk., vol. 3, p. 144.
[65] Bd. 30. 10; cf. Jackson, *Persia Past and Present*, p. 75, New York, 1906.
[66] Dd. 14. 5.

The souls called together in this great and last judicial assembly recognize each other after the long separation.[67] The father sees his son, and the brother meets his sister, the husband greets his wife, the relative welcomes his kinsman, and the friend inquires after the experience of his friend. Every one eagerly narrates his or her account of the joys or sorrows during the long period of separation from their comrades of the material world.[68] The wicked ones taunt their righteous friends or relatives with the bitter reproach that it had not been good on their part to have practised righteousness themselves, and yet to have left them unwarned in the indulgence of vice.[69-70] The righteous weep for the wicked, and the wicked weep for themselves in the midst of this universal mourning, while the righteous are being separated from the wicked and sent back to heaven.[71] So far they had enjoyed bliss and felicity in their spiritual condition, they now enter heaven in body, and have the satisfaction of seeing even the bodily grievances of their earthly life adjusted.

Bodily punishment. The wicked are now cast back to hell, where they suffer bodily punishment for three days.[72] Hitherto their life in hell was torment of the spirit, now the very body that on earth was instrumental in bringing the spiritual fall of the soul suffers materially. It is said that the wicked soul suffers three kinds of punishment at three different periods. Firstly, in this world during the earthly life; secondly, in hell from the night after the individual's death up to the period of the Renovation in spiritual form; and thirdly, now for three days in hell in the bodily form.[73]

Ordeal of molten metal. The final punishment of being tortured in hell and burnt in a river of molten metal for three nights, after Ormazd's judgment is given, is in store for the wicked souls. A comet will fall from heaven and melt all the metals and minerals in the earth, and will burn up the world in a general conflagration. A boiling flood of the metals of Shatravar will then flow over the earth, and the righteous as well as the wicked souls will be made to pass into it.[74] In this glowing flood the wicked souls will be purged of their sins, so that they be-

[67] Bd. 30. 9.
[68] Bd. 30. 21.
[69-70] Bd. 30. 11.
[71] Bd. 30. 12, 14, 15.
[72] Bd. 30. 13.
[73] Phl. Vd. 7. 52.
[74] Jsp., pp. 119, 120.

come wholly purified,[75] while the righteous will feel as if they were walking in warm milk.[76] The torture of the worst sinners, such as Zohak, Afrasiab, and the rest, during these three nights is more intense than that of all others.[77] This final conflagration brings freedom of the sinners from the prison of hell.[78]

The righteous and the wicked shall no longer remain as divided, but unite into one. Then, following the great conflagration, there will be the final renovation of the world. The sinners who have been thus purified and purged of their sins by the fiery metal become worthy of eternal bliss;[79] and that final punishment will absolve them of their sins.[80] The entire creation of Ormazd now becomes virtuous.[81] The wicked no longer remain wicked,[82] but become righteous.[83] The angels under whose influence they had done good deeds in the world approach them and give joy to them in the proportion of these good deeds.[84] The happiness of the souls that were already righteous is far greater than that of the wicked who had been cleansed through torture and punishment.[85] The erring children are now restored to the bosom of the Heavenly Father, and Ormazd now takes back the entire creation to himself.[86]

The removal of the imperfection of the material bodies of men. The completion of heavenly bliss requires that it be everlasting. The human soul is immortal, but the body is not so. Therefore Soshyos and his companions prepare through an Izishna ceremony a nectar from the fat of the ox Hadhayosh and the white Hom juice, through a draught of which all beings become immortal forever and everlasting.[87] Every one is given an immortal body and becomes as innocent in nature as cattle.[88] The entire good creation is henceforth immortal.[89] Any one who

[75] Bd. 30. 20; Dd. 32. 12, 13; 37. 110, 111; Mkh. 21. 10.
[76] Bd. 30. 20.
[77] Bd. 30. 16.
[78] Dk., vol. 2, p. 104; vol. 8, p 476.
[79] Dd. 14. 8; Dk., vol. 5, p. 332; vol. 9, p. 627.
[80] Dk., vol. 6, p. 421.
[81] Dk., vol. 7, pp. 458, 469.
[82] Phl. Vd. 7. 52.
[83] Dd. 32. 14.
[84] Dd. 32. 15.
[85] *Ib.*, 16.
[86] Dk., vol. 12, bk. 6. 279, p. 7.
[87] Bd. 19. 13; 30. 25; Dd. 37. 119.
[88] Dk., vol. 1, p. 50; vol. 6, p. 421.
[89] Dk., vol. 4, p. 204; vol. 7, p. 472.

was a full grown man when he had died is given the appearance of a man of forty years of age; and those who died at an early age are given the stature of a youth of fifteen years.[90] Husbands and wives united with their children live together, even as they lived and acted in this world, but there is no begetting of children.[91] Their existence in paradise is accompanied by the full enjoyment of their reward for ever and ever.[92] They are hungerless and thirstless, undecaying and undying, undistressed and ever-beneficial.[93] Neither a blow, nor a knife, nor a sword, nor a club, nor a stone, nor an arrow hurts the body, for it is now perfected and is immune from pain of any sort.[94] Bodily ailments have vanished.[95] The portals of eternal bliss are now flung open to the whole humanity.[96]

The last decisive battle between the forces of good and evil. Then will follow the last and decisive battle of the eternal war between the rival armies of Ormazd and Ahriman. Every one of the good spirits will combat with his adversary, and in every case the success will be on the side of the good. Ormazd assails Ahriman, Vohuman seizes on Akoman, Artavahisht on Indar, Shatravar on Sovar, Spandarmad on Taromat or Naonghas, Khurdad and Amardad on Tairev and Zairich, Truth on Falsehood, and Srosh on Eshm.[97] Druj will perish.[98] Hell itself is burnt out. Ormazd comes down to the world and acts as the Zota, sacrificial priest, together with Srosh as his Raspi, and holds the sacred thread-girdle in his hands. The holy formulas confound the Evil Spirit, who, now impotent, rushes back to darkness by the same passage through which he had come out at the beginning of creation.[99]

Demon and fiend, deceit and falsehood, strife and anger, hatred and ill-temper, pain and disease, want and greediness, shame and fear, all perish.[100] Evil of every kind disappears, and good of every kind is perfected.[101] Ormazd at last becomes completely predominant,[102] and his kingdom of Righteousness is built upon the earth.

Humanity attunes its will to the will of Ormazd. All men now become of one will[103] and remain of one accord in the

[90] Jsp., p. 120.
[91] Bd. 30. 26.
[92] Bd. 30. 27.
[93] Dd. 37. 119.
[94] Dd. 37. 122-125.
[95] Dk., vol. 4, p. 234.
[96] Dk., vol. 5, p. 332.
[97] Bd. 30. 29.
[98] Dk., vol. 6, p. 421.
[99] Bd. 30. 30.
[100] Dd. 37. 120, 121.
[101] Dd. 37. 122.
[102] Dd. 7. 3.
[103] Dd. 37. 127.

faith of Ormazd,[104] giving voice in song to the Glory of their Lord.[105] On no account will their will be in conflict with the divine will, but will ever coincide with it.[106] They now live in the blessed company of Ormazd,[107] and work to exalt his glory.

[104] Dk., SBE., vol. 47, bk. 7. 11. 6, p. 117.
[105] Bd. 30. 23.
[106] Dk., vol. 5, p. 332.
[107] Dk., vol. 8, p. 436.

A PERIOD OF DECADENCE

FROM THE SEVENTH TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

CHAPTER XXXIII

DOWNFALL OF THE SASANIANS, AND THE AFTERMATH

Iran sinks before the hordes of Arabs. The death of Khusru Parviz, who had waged the last war in the standing rivalry with the West, heralded the collapse of the Persian empire. The death-knell of the national greatness had been struck when with the advent of the weak kings on the throne the commanders, who felt the allegiance of the army to them rather than to the person of the king, persuaded the army to revolt. Rival princes strove to assert their respective rights to the throne. Court intrigues and strifes became rife. The long wars with the Romans in the far West and the Eastern hordes near at home, whose inroads were facilitated by the unfavourable geographical position of Persia, had exhausted the national resources. Famine and plague had extended their ravages over the whole country. Unbridled luxury, with all its concomitant vices, was imported from foreign lands, and the simplicity of life inculcated by Zarathushtra and zealously upheld by the Dasturs was abandoned. The masses did not escape the contagion of the luxury and vice of the nobility, and the love of simplicity was replaced by a feverish worship of pleasure. The simple habits fostered by agricultural pursuits were on the wane; and the entire social fabric of Iran was seriously dislocated. The springs of patriotism were sapped, and the bravery with which the Persians of old had faced their national foes was weakened. The age of valour had given place to an age of weakness and decay.

These causes aggravated the downfall of Iran and foreshadowed the coming catastrophe, and there was none to come out as a saviour in this the darkest period of the nation's agony, so as to avert the impending ruin. In the midst of this chaos and confusion, Yazdagard III, the last of the illustrious house of Sasan, sat on the tottering throne. The nomads of the deserts of Arabia were for the first time knit into a nation by the new faith. Pul-

sating with the vigour and zeal of youth, and frenzied by the sudden rise of fortune, the host of these formidable foes overran Iran in the first half of the seventh century; and the decisive battles of Qadisiya and Nihavand sealed her fate. The Kingly Glory that had guarded the fortunes of the nation had flown away, and the star of Islam had risen. The Crescent superseded the Kava banner, Shahinshah was followed by Caliph, Ormazd was replaced by Allah. Zaratusht gave place to Muhammad, the Koran supplanted the Avesta, and the thrilling cry of the Muazzin from the minaret of the mosque drowned the intonations of the Mobad at the altar in the fire-temple.

Persecution and conversion. The Iranian nation now broke into pieces. There was not the remotest chance of its ever rising to power again. Confusion and chaos became rampant. The sufferings wrought on the faithful by the conquering hordes defy description. Tens of thousands embraced Islam, and threw in their lot with the conquerors to find relief from the persecution that raged around them. Those that were more devoted to the national faith resolved to stick to it at any cost. In this they were imitating their prophet who, when tempted by Ahriman to renounce the good Mazdayasnian religion, had said that he would not do so even to save his body or his life.[1] The inevitable had come, but they could not afford to resign themselves to it. If they fostered the spirit of resignation and despair, they would be wiped away from the surface of the earth in the intense struggle for existence. Zoroastrianism inspired them from within to assert themselves, even in the face of disheartening obstacles of such magnitude and the fear of coming calamities that were ever imminent. If Ahriman had reduced them to such an abject state, it was cowardice to succumb to his doing. It was heroic to revolt against it.

The frequent ravages caused by the inroads of the Tartar and Turk, Mongol and Afghan hordes added to the hardships of the Iranians. Persecutions checkered their progress. Century after century their number decreased by repeated conversions to Islam. Writing to their coreligionists in India in the fifteenth century, they complain that ever since the overthrow of the empire they are living under such troublesome times that the atrocities of a Zohak, or an Afrasiab, or an Alexander,

[1] Vd. 19. 7.

pale before what they have been suffering for nine centuries.[2] The unfortunate people were denied freedom of thought, safety of life and property, and human justice up to the end of the last century. They retired within themselves, became effeminate, and struggled to eke out an unhappy existence. They slept smarting under the indignities inflicted on them during the day, were haunted by the spectre of persecution in their dreams, and awoke in the morning with gloomy thoughts of the impending morrow. At best they were suffered to exist, they could not live humanly. This was the veritable iron age of Zoroastrianism and its followers, spoken of in the Bahman Yasht. Zoroastrianism has struggled for its very existence during this period in Persia, and its followers during such troublous times had to practise their religious rites by stealth.

Almost every vestige of Iranian scholarship perishes. The literary edifice of Iran had crumbled along with the empire, after the invasion of Alexander the Great. What little the nation was able to restore during the Sasanian period fell now once more before the devastating fury of the Arabs. Iranian culture never truly emerged from the shock of this final blow. We meet with occasional attempts on the part of the priests to save the literary tradition from extinction. The fall of the Umayyads and the ascendency of the Abbasid Caliphs in 749, which succeeded in supplanting the Arab supremacy by a Persian power, gave the Zoroastrians a favourable opportunity of peacefully conducting their literary activities; and some of the important Pahlavi works that have come down to us were produced during this period, more particularly in the reign of al-Mamun (A.D. 813-833). After that era the literary activity appears to have been arrested, for no original works were produced that can be assigned to the period following. The work of copying manuscripts, however, was carried on up to modern times, and it is owing to the zealous activity of faithful adherents to the cause that the ancient works have reached us.

A glimpse into the religious life of the Iranians during the centuries that followed. From this period onward we have very little knowledge of the religious life of the stray remnants of Zoroastrians in Persia. The insufficiency of the data prevents us from forming any very clear opinion about their beliefs. What

[2] Patell, *Parsi Prakash,* vol. I., p. 6, Bombay, 1888.

little information we have of this period comes mostly from the Muhammadan writers.

Al-Biruni, who flourished about A.D. 1000, gives some scattered information on miscellaneous matters of religious practices, which he gathered from the Zoroastrians of his day. We shall select some points of interest from his description. The angel Srosh, he notes, is spoken of as the most powerful angel against the sorcerers, and he visits the world three times during the night to rout them. It was Srosh who introduced the practice of Zamzama, that is, reciting one's prayers with closed lips and emitting inarticulate sounds or in *bāj,* as the Zoroastrians do to this present day. Artavahisht, as the genius of fire and light, watches over mankind, he says, and heals diseases with drugs, but besides this, as the genius who presides at the ordeal by fire, distinguishes a truth-speaking man from a liar.[3] We have already seen that by the end of the Pahlavi period the sharp distinction between man's soul and his Farohar was forgotten, and both were regarded as one and the same. Commenting upon the observance of the Fravardigan festival, or the days set apart for the propitiation of the Farohars, in his own time, al-Biruni says that the Zoroastrians believed that the souls of the dead, both righteous and wicked, descended to the earth during these ten days. They, therefore, fumigated the houses with juniper, and put dishes of food and drink on the roofs of their houses, in the pious expectation that the souls would inhale their savour and receive nourishment and comfort. The pious souls, moreover, assumed invisible forms, dwelt among their relatives, and took part in their affairs.[4] Spandarmad, he observes, is the guardian of the earth and of chaste women who are devoted to their husbands. On the fifth day of the twelfth month, both of which take their names after this archangel, the author says people write a charm on three pieces of paper to scare away the noxious creatures and fix them on three walls of the house.[5] The custom lingers in some Parsi families in India up to this day. People get a Pahlavi incantation written by the priests, preferably in red, and stick it to the front door of their houses. Zoroastrianism never enjoined days of fast, and we have already seen from the Pahlavi works that fasting was regarded a sin.

[3] *Chronology,* tr. Sachau, p. 204, London, 1879.
[4] *Ib.,* p. 210.
[5] *Ib.,* p. 216.

The injunction not to fast seems to have been faithfully followed, for al-Biruni attests that he who observed a fast was compelled to feed some needy persons by way of expiation for his sin.[6]

We have already seen that the religious dissensions during the Parthian and Sasanian periods had racked the Zoroastrian world. Sects and heresies had sprung up in consequence. Several of these flourished in Iran for centuries after the downfall of the Persian empire. Shahristani (A.D. 1086-1153) in his Book of Sects attests the existence of some of these in his times. The more prominent of these were the Mazdakites, Zarvanites, and the Gayomarthians. The latter sect, about which we hear for the first time, evidently derived its name from Gayomard, the primeval man. The followers of this sect, we are told, believe in an eternal being who is called Yazdan. This first principle, it is said, existed when there was nothing beside him; he entertained a thought in his mind on the probability of the origin of an adversary. This evil thought originated Ahriman, the spirit of darkness. Ever since the manifestation of this evil one, there goes on a fierce war between the powers of light and darkness.[7]

This appears to be still another attempt to palliate dualism which has ever been the crux of Zoroastrianism. The question comes up time after time and was the cause of many sectarian divisions among the believers. Worshipping two Gods must have been the taunt hurled at the doctors of the Zoroastrian Church by the Moslem divines. Those among the Mazdayasnians who seem to have viewed dualism as a flaw in their religious system apparently endeavoured to give it a monistic form by declaring that Yazdan originated Ahriman.

The Zoroastrian author of the Ulama-i Islam, a controversial treatise in Persian, written in about the fourteenth century, acquaints us with the different opinions held in his own day, to account for this ever-recurring problem. Himself a Zarvanite, the author attests the existence of several different sects, who variously held that both Ormazd and Ahriman have originated from Time, or that Ormazd himself permitted evil to exist in order that his goodness might be better appreciated, or that Ahriman was a reprobate angel who revolted from Ormazd.[8]

[6] *Ib.*, p. 217.

[7] Haarbrücker, *Religionspartheien und Philosophenschulen*, 1, pp. 276, 277, Halle, 1850.

[8] Tr. Vullers, p. 52, Bonn, 1831; tr. Blochet, p. 22, Paris, 1898.

A Persian treatise entitled *Siwar-i Akalim-i Sab'ah,* or Sketches of Seven Countries, composed at the beginning of the fifteenth century, states that the Magi believe God and Iblis to be two brothers. A thousand years of the world are a cycle of God, and a thousand of Satan.[9]

The Rivayat literature, a collection of questions and answers on ritual observances exchanged between the Parsis of India and their coreligionists in Persia, between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, enables us to gain an insight into the theological beliefs of the Zoroastrians of Persia during that time, and as these Rivayats were compiled in India, we shall recur to them when we discuss the Indian period.

The Zoroastrian community in Persia, during these centuries, lay steeped in the grossest ignorance and darkness. Although the condition of the Zoroastrians in their fatherland had been growing more and more precarious, they still had succeeded, amid chaos and confusion, in maintaining for a considerably long time their superiority over their Indian coreligionists in the knowledge of their sacred literature. We shall see in the subsequent pages how the Indian Parsis had to look to the Iranians for enlightenment in religious matters. The learned Iranian Mobad Jamasp, who came from Kerman to Surat in 1721, found the state of the intelligence of the Zoroastrian priests in India so low that he resolved to impart religious instruction to some of the leading high priests during the period of his stay in the land. The Dasturs of Surat, Navsari, and Broach consequently became his disciples;[10] and the first of these, Dastur Darab, later became the teacher of Anquetil du Perron. But the times later changed. Zoroastrian scholarship could not thrive in Persia, as it was able to do under the conditions in India. The mother-country today has to look to her thriving children living in India for religious instruction, and for masters from the adopted land able to teach the Zoroastrian Persians themselves, as Persia has not been in a position for more than a hundred years to give any real instruction to the Indian Parsis, or to produce any literary work that would throw light on their sacred books. Zoroaster's teachings had, for a century, been losing their hold upon the community of the faithful in Iran. When the representative

[9] Eng. tr. by Yohannan and Jackson in JAOS., vol. 28, pp. 183-188.
[10] Patell, *Parsi Prakash,* vol. 1, pp. 23, 24, Bombay, 1888.

of the Society for the Amelioration of the Zoroastrians in Persia, founded by the munificence of the Parsis of India, first visited Persia in the middle of the last century, he found persons of full age living without the sacred shirt and girdle, the indispensable marks of a Zoroastrian. He saw them smoking tobacco without any compunction. Superstition had been rampant.

It was manifest the pristine purity of the faith had departed with the greatness and glory of the Iranian nation. The sacred fire, kindled by the holy prophet in the remote past, was still there, it is true, but the demon Az had stretched his icy hands to extinguish it, leaving the fire of Ormazd only smouldering in ashes upon the altar. Nevertheless, though shorn of its innate radiance, its sparks were not quenched, and its ashes were still hot; only a Tansar or an Adarbad was needed to fan it into a flame.

Such has been the tale of sorrow and suffering of the group that chose to remain behind their enterprising coreligionists who, engendered by a spirit of adventure, set sail for India and planted their colonies in Gujarat. Different is the story that the Indian group has to tell us. It is one of phenomenal progress, unprecedented prosperity, social regeneration, and religious revival. To this we shall now turn.

CHAPTER XXXIV

EXODUS TO INDIA

The Deva-worshippers of India greet the Daeva-abjurers of Iran. After the collapse of the house of Sasan, several hundreds of the adventurous people, not finding any human court in which to lodge their complaints, resolved to abandon their fatherland in quest of a more peaceful home, where they could practise their faith with a liberty of conscience so ruthlessly denied them by their conquerors. A burning passion for their ancient home and love for liberty of conscience clashed. The latter conquered and a noble band of Iranian exiles now streamed to India in successive waves. Here they found an asylum. India, the land of the devas, magnanimously welcomed the fugitives of Iran, whose religion had branded their devas as evil. The fire of Ormazd found a hospitable hearth in the new land which the early Parsi settlers adopted as their home. The Parsi atharvan tended his sacred fire, even as the Hindu atharvan did his in the next street. The Parsi Mobad performed the Yasna ceremony and squeezed the Haoma plant, as his Hindu Brahman neighbour practised his Yasna rites and pounded Soma.

Reviling each other's gods, yet living peacefully together. We have already seen that the points of difference between the religious beliefs of the two nations are as many as are the points of resemblance between them. This is seen in the daily practices of the two peoples. The Hindu rises in the morning to begin his day's work with the devout utterance of devas on his lips, the Parsi leaves his bed cursing them. One seeks their help, the other does battle to them. One invokes them with his uplifted hands, the other lashes them with his sacred girdle. The Hindu anathematizes the *asuras* as the infernal beings, the Parsi pays his homage to the *ahuras* as the celestial beings. Such is the manner in which the Indian and Iranian branches of the Aryan family have behaved towards each other for over a thousand years in India where they met each other once more after the

long ages of separation. This is certainly a most curious phenomenon in the religious history of the world, and without a parallel case, in which two friendly peoples living close together incessantly revile each other's gods without in the least impairing their friendly relations.

A period of literary arrest. The unsettled times that followed the first settlement of the Parsis in India were unfavourable to literary activity. Centuries full of hardships intervened before Zoroastrianism gained a real foothold in India and secured for its adherents some means of livelihood in this new country of their adoption. Severe was the struggle and terrible was the trial of the faithful throughout the vicissitudes of all this early period. Poverty, an insurmountable barrier to progress of any kind, haunted the faithful followers of Zoroaster for a long time. When we look at the condition of the times, it is no wonder that the literary movement among the Parsis was arrested for a considerable interval before these emigrants succeeded in adapting themselves to the changed circumstances in which they were placed. Religious knowledge orally transmitted from generation to generation, however, kept alive the native tradition; but no written works have come down to us of this period. With our slender resources we are unable to ascertain the precise scope of the literary activity of the first five or six centuries of Parsi settlement in India.

Pahlavi studies. After an absolute blank extending over a period of three centuries, we come across the only literary compositions of this period in the form of the Pahlavi inscriptions in one of the Kanheri caves near Bombay, which record the two visits of some Parsi travellers in 1009 and 1021 A.D.[1] Pahlavi seems to have long remained the literary language of the learned Zoroastrian priests in India; and the traditional knowledge of the language had not become extinct. Though the insufficiency of data prevents us from saying anything with certainty, we cannot be wide of the truth when we say that a number of learned priests had with unflagging zeal kept the torch of Iranian scholarship burning. The masterly Sanskrit version of the Pahlavi texts done in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is an eloquent evidence of this.

[1] West, *The Pahlavi Inscriptions at Kanheri*, in *Indian Antiquary*, 9. 265-8, Bombay, 1880.

Parsi-Sanskrit literature. Some of the Parsi scholars, who frequently came in contact with the learned Brahmans, seem to have adopted Sanskrit, the learned language of the land, for their literary productions. The extant Parsi literature produced in this tongue comprises the translation into Sanskrit of the greater part of the Avestan Yasna, Khordah Avesta, and Aogemadaecha, based on their Pahlavi versions; also a Sanskrit translation of the Pahlavi works Menuk-i Khrat, Shikand Gumanik Vijar, and Arda Viraf Namah, and the Sanskrit version of the Pazand Ashirvad. The most illustrious representative of this group of Parsi Sanskritists is Neryosangh Dhaval, who flourished about 1200 A.D. He has been one of the most eminent doctors of the Parsi church in India, and has made the versions of the major portion of the Zoroastrian work that has come down to us accompanied by a Sanskrit version. We shall not pause here to consider the question of the literary merit of this particular form of the literature, as that lies beyond the pale of the present work. As the Sanskrit works are merely the faithful translations of the Pahlavi texts, and not any original compositions, we look in vain in them for any side-information on the religious thought of this period. What we do find from them is the fact that the religious studies were prosecuted with great zeal at this period, and that the knowledge of Avestan in general, and of Pahlavi and Sanskrit in particular, among the learned clerics was of a superior order.

CHAPTER XXXV

RIVAYATS

Persian Rivayats, or codes of usages and rituals. We have again to pass over a period of about three centuries, or from about the thirteenth century to the latter part of the fifteenth century, before we come across some further record of literary activity. After the convulsions that the small band of fugitives experienced, they had settled down as the tillers of the fields, sellers of liquor and toddy, as minor traders and merchants, or as members of petty professions. By this time, however, the Parsis of Gujarat had begun fairly to prosper. Some of them had even succeeded in building up modest fortunes, and had spread abroad their fame for liberality. This beginning of the economic welfare of the community shows the first signs of the new life, and among these signs was the fact that the community began eagerly to turn its attention to the necessity of gaining authentic information of the religious questions about which they were in doubt. The Parsis of India thought that their co-religionists living in Persia must be better informed on religious matters than themselves, and must have preserved the old-time tradition more faithfully than they themselves did. They therefore drew up certain religious questions on which they needed enlightenment, and in 1478 commissioned a daring Parsi to go to Persia and lay their questions before the learned Dasturs of their fatherland. The news that a band of fugitives lived in India who were one in faith with them, and shared their common traditions, had long since filtered through to the Zoroastrians of Persia. In fact it is possible that the connection between the two bands of the faithful, though imperfect, had never been quite broken. Intercourse through trade, as well as other factors, must have helped to keep up some connection. Great, therefore, was the enthusiasm caused by the fresh opening of a closer communication with them; and for nearly three centuries (1478-1766) a more immediate interchange of views took place between the

Zoroastrians of India and Persia. No less than twenty-two messengers had left India during this period with questions pertaining to ritual observances, ceremonial ablutions, purificatory rites, forms of worship, rules of adoption and marriage, and other miscellaneous subjects. These collections of traditions, customs, and rites, arranged in the form of questions and answers, are composed in Persian, which became the literary language of the Parsi scholars under the influence of the Moslem rule of Gujarat. These compilations are called Rivayats, and provide a wealth of information on liturgical and social matters. Side by side with a score of important subjects, the disquisitions sometimes fall to the level of barren theological disputations. Among such discussions, for example, were points like these: Whether the Avestan texts could be copied with ink prepared by a non-Zoroastrian, whether the faithful be polluted by conversing with the non-Zoroastrians while they are carrying a dead body, whether a Mobad who has eaten clarified butter prepared by a non-Zoroastrian can ever regain bodily purity by means of ceremonial ablutions.

Theology of the period. Bundahishn and Sad Dar, Jamaspi, and Arda Viraf Namah inspired the clergy and laity in their conduct of life at this period rather than did the Gathas and other Avestan works. The formal rather than the spiritual, the concrete rather than the abstract, seem to be the prominent feature of the beliefs that we can glean from the Rivayats. The hope of the joys of a materialized heaven and the fear of the sufferings of a physical hell guide and control man's life upon earth. Man's soul and his Farohar are taken, in the Rivayats, for one and the same. The souls and not the Farohars are believed to come down on earth on their monthly or yearly anniversaries.[1] The souls of the righteous persons descend on earth and remain here for full ten days of the Farohar festival, but the souls of the wicked ones are given only five days' leave of absence from hell to visit their earthly homes.[2] If the souls are properly propitiated, they rejoice and bless; if not, they complain and curse.[3] It came to be believed that the Yasna sacrifices offered in the name of the Farohars, or of the angel Hom, or those of Zaratusht, Gushtasp, and other sainted dead persons, could thwart

[1] Mehrji Rana, *Rivayat-i Darab Hormuzdiar,* pp. 39, 40.
[2] Rv. p. 63.
[3] Rv. pp. 40, 41.

the evil designs of their enemies; could rout the demons and fairies; could oppose the tyrant kings; could withstand famine and plague, retard the evil consequences of bad dreams, gain favour of kings and noblemen, and secure various advantages.[4]

We are informed, moreover, that the reason of consecrating a set of white garments on the fourth day after death is to provide a corresponding heavenly garment to the soul in the next world; because, we are told, the soul is quite naked, when it is liberated from body at death, and is naturally ashamed to enter the assembly of the heavenly souls who are all clad in fine raiment. The souls are awarded heavenly garments in proportion to what is consecrated to them by their kinsmen in this world. The richer the quality of the garment consecrated here, the finer the raiment bestowed upon the soul in heaven.[5]

Bull's urine, or golden water, as it is now called, has been an indispensable article in the purificatory rites and ceremonial ablutions among the Zoroastrians from the earliest times. From the strong belief in the efficacy of its giving external bodily purification, it was but a step to the idea of attributing to it the power of purifying the internal nature of man. A most extravagant sanctity came to be attached to the drinking of it. Elaborate rituals are now performed over the liquid, and the drinking of this consecrated fluid forms an indissoluble part of certain Zoroastrian ceremonials. The Rivayats tell us that the drink gives divine glory, and makes man's inner nature as bright and pure as the sun; nay, this sanctified liquid is the very life of religion.[6]

Bull's urine has been, since ancient times, an essential auxiliary of spells or formulas used to exorcise those possessed by evil powers; but the original Avestan and Pahlavi word *gaomaeza* or *gomez* fell into disuse by the Rivayat time, and the term *nîrang*, which originally meant spell only, now signifies both spell and bull's urine, and henceforth conveys both the meanings.

The incantations of the Pazand and Persian Nirangs or formulas were used to deprecate evil, to rout the malignant demons of disease, to remove barrenness in women, to ward off the fear of thieves and robbers, to put down sorcery and witchcraft, to preserve a child from the evil eye, to exorcise persons possessed of ghosts and goblins, and to cure all kinds of sickness. Charms inscribed with such spells and tied on the left hand of

[4] Rv. pp. 97, 98. [5] Rv. pp. 347, 348. [6] Rv. p. 45.

a child made it wise and dutiful. The same tied on the left arm of a refractory wife brought her on her knees before her husband. The faithful strove to gain health and wealth by virtue of the recital of these formulas. These secured them the good-will of great persons in this world and divine grace in the next world. Such in general is the view we may gather from the Rivayats regarding the conditions prevailing in that period.

CHAPTER XXXVI

MYSTICS AND MYSTICISM

Desatir and Dabistan. In the early part of the last century appeared the text and translation of the Desatir, alleged to have a heavenly origin, and to have been written down in the reign of Khusru Parviz and thus to throw a flood of light on Zoroastrianism. A very heated controversy was the result of the appearance of this work. One party of eminent European scholars declared it to be a fraudulent forgery, while others of equal eminence endeavoured to prove its authenticity. The claim of the Desatir to have been written in a celestial language was put to a crucial test. Patient research has since declared the book to be an exotic, outside the pale of Zoroastrianism. And so it has been held ever since by all Iranian scholars both of East and West.

In this work are given the teachings of various mystic schools, and the entire treatise breathes a totally different atmosphere from that of the genuine Zoroastrian works, being divergent in tone from the true spirit from its very beginning to its close. The Iranian scriptures of all periods have recognized Gayomard as the primeval man, who was the progenitor of the human race, and who, first among mortals, heard the divine word of Ormazd.[1] But this work, on the contrary, gives a regular hierarchy of prophets who are supposed to have preceded the first man. God first revealed his secrets to one Mahabad, who was followed by thirteen other prophets in the former cycles of time bearing his name. Through them the supposed revelation came down to Gayomard and his descendants. It is alleged in this book, moreover, that all the early Peshdadian kings conformed to this religion of Mahabad, until the time that Zoroaster came and preached his fundamentally new religion. But even the new prophet's religion, we are told, was so glossed over by the Yazdanians, the followers

[1] Yt. 13. 87.

of Mahabad, that Zoroastrianism was ultimately made to conform to the Mahabadian code.[2]

Another Persian work entitled *Dabistān,* or *School of Manners,* written in India by Mohsan Fani in the seventeenth century, draws the greater part of its materials from the Desatir. The author of this composition mentions some fourteen sects into which he finds the Zoroastrians of his day divided. These are the Sipasian, Abadian, Jamshaspian, Samradian, Khodaiyan, Radian, Shidrangian, Paikarian, Milanian, Alarian, Shidabian, Akhshiyan, Zardushtian, and Mazdakian. Several of these sects are stated to have flourished from very remote times, going back to the Pahlavi and Avestan periods, nay stretching even back to a period of which history has not a word to tell. With the exception of these two works, however, we have no inkling of other sects in the genuine Iranian texts. The statements contained in them are not corroborated by any authority in the writings of the Zoroastrian priests. They do not mention them by name, they are entirely unaware of their existence. The account of the majority of these sects, as found in the Dabistan, is very meagre. We meet with some attempts in them to explain the primordial principle from which creation came into being, and we have some sort of crude metaphysics grafted on physics. Sun, fire, air, nature, water, and earth are alternately put forward as having been the physical sources of existence according to various schools of thinkers.[3] Others still preach a strict monism, and assume that the world of phenomena was caused by illusion.[4] The teachings of the Yazdanians and others are characterized by a belief in metempsychosis, as well as in the efficacy of rigorous austerities and ascetic virtues. Our present concern, however, is with the author's account of the Zoroastrian mystics, and we shall now turn to the matter immediately.

Zoroastrian mystics. At this period we meet with some Parsi thinkers who were not satisfied with the formal side of religion, and looked with indifference upon the ritual observances. Outward formalism and literal interpretation of the teachings of the prophet failed to meet with the longings of these men of mystic temperament. They ever remained in search of mysteries hidden beneath the outward garb of dogmas and rituals. The

[2] *Dabistan,* tr. Shea and Troyer, vol. I, p. 30, Paris, 1843.
[3] Vol. I, pp. 202-207.
[4] *Ib.,* vol. I, p. 195.

exoterics had said in effect: 'Thus far and no further, for beyond the veil of mystery the human mind cannot penetrate.' On the other hand, the esoterics had asserted with confidence that with discipline and meditation they could lift up the veil and peer into the hidden secrets. Not satisfied with discarding, as illusive, the experience and knowledge gathered through the senses, the latter questioned the authority of reason as the ultimate source of knowledge. Intuition was extolled above reason. Reason, they urged, was not capable of comprehending Ormazd. To attempt to see him through the medium of reason was to lose him. All knowledge was relative, therefore the only way to know God was by getting out of the region of the ordinary senses. Human intelligence was debarred from entering this inner sphere. Though reason might conduct the adept to the divine portal, intuition alone could enable him to penetrate into the sanctuary and have a vision of Ormazd. This transcendental insight would give him a supra-rational apprehension of divine wisdom. Truth would dawn thus upon him, and shine in its effulgence, while an ecstatic insight would be aroused in him and in a moment of ecstasy, when the devotee would transcend all self-consciousness, the wave of the occult light would surge in upon him, and the mysterious something would sweep, like a meteor, over his soul, giving a sudden flash that would illumine the inner world. The nightingale in its transport of joy sings to the glory of God, until it becomes half frenzied. When the mystic is bathed in devotion, he is so intoxicated with divine wisdom that he thinks himself one with the Divine. In this condition the devotee does not meditate upon God, he feels him; he does not think of God, he owns him. The Parsi priesthood could not satisfy the wants of such ecstatic enthusiasts. They revolted from authority, and set about thinking for themselves. These dissenters as a body lived a life different from that led by their neighbours. Many of them found consolation in the teachings of the Hindu Yogis and became their willing disciples. Under these circumstances we have to turn to the Dabistan for the general information of this sect, as the historic Parsi works are inexplicably silent over the question and do not even notice its existence.

Azar Kaivan and his disciples. The author of the Dabistan gives us an elaborate account of the Zoroastrian mystics whom he met in Patna, in Kashmir, and in Lahore during the seven-

teenth century.[5] The most illustrious of these mystic teachers was Dastur Azar Kaivan, who came from Persia and settled in Patna,[6] and lived for years in seclusion far from the public gaze.[7] Some of the most prominent disciples of this recluse sage were the Mobads Farzan Bahram of Shiraz, Hushiyyar of Surat, Sarosh, and Khuda Jui. They extravagantly trace their lineage back to Mahabad, to Sam, Godrej, Rustam, Jamasp, Zoroaster, and Noshirvan. Let us now pass on to a brief notice of the literary activity of these hermit priests.

Mystic literature during the century. These Parsi mystics composed several treatises in Persian, which, as we have already seen, was the literary medium of this period. Among the more important works that have thus come down to us are Jam-i Kaikhusru, Makashefat-i Kaivani, Khishtab, Zaredasht Afshar, and Zindah Rud. The authors of the last three allege that their works are translations into Persian from the original Pahlavi books written in the days of the Sasanian kings Hormaz and Khusru Parviz. A search through the literary content of these writings, however, shows that their philosophical dissertations mostly reproduce the teachings of Greek philosophy, current in India in the seventeenth century through its Arabic version. For instance, the Khishtab opens with the prophet Mahabad's descriptions of the four generative principles of things, which are nothing else but the material, formal, efficient, and final causes of Aristotle. The authors fantastically credit the legendary and real kings and princes of Persia with the philosophical ideas, which on very little examination can easily be traced to their original Greek sources. These royal personages are styled prophets or seers and depicted as advancing some original argument for the proof of the existence of God, of his eternal attributes, and regarding other kindred subjects. Even the warrior heroes Zal and Rustam seem occasionally to have proclaimed a truce to warfare, and to have devoutly sat down in more peaceful pursuit of metaphysical investigations; for some of the philosophical disquisitions stand in their names too.

The alleged twofold meaning of the Avesta. These esoteric interpreters of the sacred works asserted that Zoroaster had couched his teachings in figurative and enigmatic language.[8]

[5] Vol. 1, 108, 115, 118, 119, 122, 123; vol. 3, 204.
[6] Db., vol. 1, 89.
[7] Db., vol. 1, 93.
[8] Db., vol. 1, 361.

The Zoroastrian scriptures were accordingly divided into 'Great Zend' and 'Little Zend,'[9] the first being followed by the adepts and initiates, and the second by the masses. The figurative language of the former hid the deeper truths from the ignorant.

The author, then, cites some instances and explains the differences between the exoteric and esoteric interpretations of the Avestan texts. For instance, when it is said that the archangel Bahman held a conference with Zoroaster and asked him to close his eyes, the vulgar, according to the Dabistan, understand that Bahman assumed human form and addressed the prophet like a mortal; but the adept is to understand by this that the true essence of man was uncompounded, and that under such a state Bahman manifested himself before Zoroaster, and his asking the prophet to close his eyes means only that the spirit asked him to eradicate all bodily attachments and suppress carnal desires of the flesh in order to enable him to get a vision of the archangel.[10] When the Zoroastrian texts seem to sanction animal slaughter, it is to be understood as an injunction to kill the animal propensities inherent in man.[11] The author states further that the passages which speak of the hermits as partaking of animal food in reasonable bounds are not to be taken literally. These simply refer to the gradual control and ultimate killing of the animal nature in man.[12] The legend that Ahriman appeared at a season festival in the guise of a glutton and devoured everything to the utter confusion of the assembly, until he was routed by preparing a dish from the flesh of a certain red cow, mixed with vinegar, garlic, and rue, at the instance of some miraculous advice, may be taken by the masses as literally true. But any one versed in esoteric wisdom, and acquainted with the doctrines inculcated by the Dabistan, knows that the killing of the red cow stands for the suppression of the sensual appetite, vinegar for the virtue of abstinence, garlic for reflection, and rue for silent meditation. All these would kill Ahrimanian propensities in man.[13] The ignorant invest Ahriman with a personality; but, really speaking, he has no independent existence, for he is not an entity, and is simply the negation of existence.[14] The aggregate of bodily passions and sensual appetites is symbolically

[9] Db., vol. I, 352.
[10] Db., vol. I, 233, 234.
[11] Db., vol. I, 65, 66, 74, 75.
[12] Db., vol. I, 240.
[13] Db., vol. I, 349, 350.
[14] Db., vol. I, 360.

termed Ahriman, named from the originator of evil,[15] and Ahriman's predominance in the world is to exist only for a limited time while the tumult of youth in man and the bodily passions in man are in the ascendency and until they are ultimately curbed and eradicated.[16] Again, the sacred books speak of Ahriman as the creator of serpents and scorpions. But these noxious creatures, according to this treatise, are nothing but allegorical expressions for the vices and passions that haunt the human mind.[17] All such persons as stick to the exoteric interpretation of the scriptures believe that Zohak actually carried two serpents on his shoulders, but the adept understands the statement as applying to the venomous tyranny and sensuality of the wicked usurper.[18] The legend of the flight of King Kaus to the heavens, his fall, and the subsequent restoration of this lost monarch to his kingdom by Rustam, has likewise an esoteric interpretation. The four eagles that carried the misguided king high up in the air, along with his throne, signify the four elements. The throne, explains the author, stands for the predominant bodily passions, the ascent means that a devotee can rise to a higher plane of existence by a life of abstinence and austerity, the fall denotes the revolt of the passions owing to some neglect in the observance of the ascetic practices, while Rustam's achievement, in finally bringing Kaus back from the forest, indicates the flash of proper knowledge that reclaims the erring aspirant from fatal mishap.[19] Thus the esoteric writings veil the truth from the gaze of the vulgar. The real and deep meaning is hidden within the outer husks; and only he who grasps this inner meaning can attain to insight into the secret doctrine. This in fact is a summary of the mystic teachings of the Parsi ascetics in the Dabistan, based evidently upon the earlier doctrines of Sufism and developed under Hindu mystic influences in India.

Ascetic practices of the Parsi mystics. The hermits practised celibacy.[20] They abstained from animal food,[21] and reduced the quantity of their daily food, until many of them could live on food weighing ten dirhams, or a fraction of an ounce, a day,[22] or in some cases on only one such unit.[23] Some could live

[15] Db., vol. 1, 360, 361.
[16] Db., vol. 1, 357-359.
[17] Db., vol. 1, 360.
[18] Db., vol. 1, 55.
[19] Db., vol. 1, 56, 57.
[20] Db., vol. 1, 113.
[21] Db., vol. 1, 95, 96, 113, 118; vol. 3, 205, 206.
[22] Db., vol. 1, 76, 77, 120.
[23] Db., vol. 1, 77, 88.

without any kind of food or drink for two or three days in succession.[24] Such devotees practised many kinds of austerities;[25] and all of these mortifications of the flesh were undergone in religious imitation of their Hindu brethren. The chief among such austerities were those of supporting themselves on the extremities of their fingers from midnight until dawn,[26] and of standing on the head with the feet raised in the air from nightfall unto sunrise.[27] By rigorous discipline some such religious enthusiasts, we are told, attained the power of suppressing their breath for three hours,[28] or even for twelve.[29] They would thus swoon away into a state of trance,[30] in which respiration and breathing were totally suspended, and by this utter self-abnegation the adepts reached the borders of utter selflessness. Mobad Hushiyyar, once plunged into deep water and remained underneath for full six hours before he raised his head above the surface.[31] These devotees, like the Indian Yogis, as shown below, are credited with the power of quitting the bodily frame at pleasure, traversing the spiritual regions, and returning to the body whenever they liked.[32] They laid claim to read the thoughts of others.[33] They are further fantastically credited with the superhuman power of performing miracles; such as causing the sun to hide his disk and appear at night, or the stars to appear during the day, walking on the surface of water, showing themselves in the form of lightning in the heavens, metamorphosing animals, rendering themselves invisible to man, assuming various forms,[34] appearing at one and the same time at distant places, bringing the dead to life, or causing the death of the living, producing food and wine from nothing,[35] causing the rains to fall or to cease, producing giants to frighten others, converting broken pottery into gold,[36] disporting in the midst of a burning fire, or swallowing it,[37] and such like.

Unmistakable influence of Hindu Yogism. All this self-mortification of the body and the assumption of occult powers sounds unfamiliar to Zoroastrian ears. The whole fabric of the ascetic and unworldly view of life is in direct antagonism to the

[24] Db., vol. I, 122, 123.
[25] Db., vol. I, 89, 108, 120; vol. 3, 204.
[26] Db.. vol. I, 113.
[27] Db., vol. I, 123.
[28] Db., vol. I, 111.
[29] Db., vol. I, 118.
[30] Db., vol. I, 84, 85.
[31] Db., vol. I, 124.
[32] Db.. vol. I, 85, 86, 93, 108, 127.
[33] Db., vol. I, 109, 116.
[34] Db., vol. I, 107, 108.
[35] Db., vol. I, 114.
[36] Db., vol. I, 115, 116.
[37] Db., vol. I, 117.

active and, in the best sense, worldly spirit of the Mazdayasnian faith. In its every detail, as indicated above, the Parsi mystic school savours of the strong influence of the Indian Yogis. The Parsi ascetics of that period seem to have been in close acquaintance with the Hindu hermits. The author of the Dabistan informs us that Mobad Hushiyyar conducted him to see some of these Hindu ascetics,[38] and he speaks equally of Parsi adepts who were in constant touch with such Hindu monks.[39] He further mentions a Parsi ascetic who moved about in Gujarat clad in the garments of a Hindu hermit,[40] and who visited the great Sikh saint, Guru Har Govind.[41] Hirbad, a great Parsi mystic, moreover, gave instructions to his disciple, Mobad Hushiyyar, either to burn or to bury his body, when dead,[42] because it mattered not whether a corpse was consigned to the fire or to the earth.[43] Every one of these details shows the total indifference on the part of these dissenters to what was really true of Zoroastrian observance.

[38] Db.. vol. 2, 137, 145.
[39] Db., vol. 2, 146.
[40] Db., vol. 2, 192, 193.
[41] Db., vol. 2, 280, 281.
[42] Db., vol. 3, 208.
[43] *Desatir,* tr. by Mulla Firuz, vol. 2, p. 29, Bombay, 1818.

CHAPTER XXXVII

RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSIES

Theological disputations. We find from the extant Persian literature that the writers of this period occupied themselves in minute quibbling and barren discussions of the ritualistic ceremonies and purificatory rites. There is no trace of original thinking on vital problems. Their energy was wholly expended on endless wranglings about dogmas and theological disquisitions. Questions were raised whether it was essential to cover the face of a corpse with the *penom,* or mouth-covering white veil; whether the legs of a corpse should be folded or left lengthwise, before it was removed to its final resting-place.[1] The community was actually divided into two parties over the first question, and so bitter was the feeling aroused that at Surat the corpses without such coverings were refused a resting-place in the Tower of Silence. The relatives of the dead had under these circumstances to carry dead bodies to Navsari for their final disposal. This resulted in the erection of separate towers for the contending parties.

Intercalation controversy provides a powerful incentive to the study of the ancient Zoroastrian scriptures. In 1720 were planted seeds of a controversy which gave, however, a real and abiding impetus to religious studies. A learned Mobad named Jamasp, who came to India from Persia, in 1721, found that the Indian Parsis were one month behind the Zoroastrians of Persia in the calculation of their year, and he strongly advocated a reform in the matter. The question did not at first arouse much attention, but later it developed into a serious problem that led to a display of strong passion and to the exchange of bitter words on both sides in the community. Learned priests in each party zealously turned to the study of the original scriptures, as a source to decide the matter, and the question was threshed out in detail, accompanied by the publication of innumerable tracts

[1] Patell, *Parsi Prakash,* 1. 23, Bombay, 1888.

and pamphlets. While the learned in the community were thus engaged in ransacking their ancient records, the masses took up the controversy acrimoniously, resorting to abuses and sometimes even to blows. The Shahinshahis, or the Imperials, represented the old order, and the dissenters styled themselves the Kadimis, or the Ancients. The former annoyed the latter by their mocking derision. Social intercourse between the two became most strained, the community was split into two sects, and separate places of worship were founded. The division of the community into two sects endures to the present day, but despite the differences obtaining between the two, time and the growth of education have obliterated the bitter feelings. Modern researches have proved that both the parties were wrong in their calculations. The accidentals of the controversy have changed during the long period of hard-fought battles, but the main question has still remained as unsettled as before. Among the chief causes that have contributed to the indefinite postponement of the reform are the indifference and apathy of the community. The question has so far received all too scanty attention, and is looked at with misgivings, as not falling in the arena of practical reform, because fraught with many complications. What we are more concerned with is, that the controversy gave new life to literary activities, and encouraged studious habits among the learned.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

AN EPOCH-MAKING ERA IN THE HISTORY OF ZOROASTRIAN RESEARCHES

Introduction of Iranian studies in the West. The inexorable decree of Providence had ruled that a new light from the West should dispel the darkness that had shrouded the pages of the sacred scriptures for ages, and add to their better understanding and elucidation. European travellers who had visited India and Persia during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries acquainted the people of the West with the religious beliefs, manners, and customs of the followers of Zoroaster. Hyde's masterly work on the Parsi religion, which drew its materials from the works of classical authors and the Persian version of the Sad Dar as well as from kindred works, appeared in 1700. Some important Iranian manuscripts had been carried from India to England, and were now shelved as curios in the Bodleian library at Oxford.

Anquetil du Perron's pioneer work. To the energetic Frenchman, Anquetil du Perron, is due the credit of making the first systematic attempt to study the Avestan texts and place their contents before the Western world. Having come across a facsimile of four leaves of the Bodleian manuscript, his curiosity was aroused, and with characteristic zeal he enlisted as a soldier in 1754 on a ship bound for India with the aim of bringing back to the Western world a knowledge of the sacred scriptures of Zoroaster. Unbounded enthusiasm, combined with the vigour of youth, enabled Anquetil to overcome the almost insuperable difficulties that stood in the way of his literary enterprise. Having acquired from Dastur Darab, the high priest of the Parsis of Surat, what inadequate knowledge he could get in those days, he returned home after six years of strenuous work and published the result of his studies in three quarto volumes in 1771. This publication created a stir in literary circles, and gave rise to a heated controversy. One school of eminent scholars in Europe declined to attach any weight to the Frenchman's work, and

denied that the grotesque stuff that he had placed before the world could ever be the work of so great a thinker and sage as Zoroaster, stoutly maintaining that Anquetil's Avesta was either a forgery or that he had been duped by the Indian Parsi Mobads. The falseness of this view, however, was ultimately shown.

Western scholarship revives Zoroastrian studies. The disinterested labours of various scholars during the subsequent years fully substantiated Anquetil's pioneer work; and when the closer affinity between the language of the Avesta and Sanskrit became generally known, the sacred texts began to be studied in the light of comparative philology, and the authenticity of the Avesta was completely proved. The seeds sown by Anquetil have since blossomed into fruitful trees in Europe, but some decades passed after the publication of his work before Western scholarship penetrated into India.

CHAPTER XXXIX

PROSELYTIZING COMES TO BE VIEWED WITH DISFAVOUR

Beginning of the spirit of exclusiveness among the Parsis. We have already seen that the handful of the Parsi fugitives who emigrated to India after the final overthrow of the Persian empire in the middle of the seventh century had to face enormous difficulties in the earlier centuries of their settlement in the new home. The precarious condition in which they lived for a considerable period made it impracticable for them to keep up their former proselytizing zeal. The instinctive fear of disintegration and absorption in the vast multitudes among whom they lived created in them a spirit of exclusiveness and a strong feeling for the preservation of the racial characteristics and distinctive features of their community. Living in an atmosphere surcharged with the Hindu caste system, they felt that their own safety lay in encircling their fold by rigid caste barriers.

The community was divided regarding the question of admitting lower classes of aliens into its fold. Though the practice of an active religious propaganda had thus fallen into desuetude, the question of conversion does not seem to have died out entirely, for we find recorded in the Rivayat literature that a heated polemic regarding the subject was carried on during the latter part of the eighteenth century. With the beginning of economic prosperity, the Indian Parsis, we learn, were in the habit of purchasing male and female slaves of low Hindu castes. These slaves, in many cases, were invested with the sacred shirt and girdle and admitted into the Zoroastrian fold by the priests at the request of their masters. Those members of the community who were opposed to the mingling of their blood with that of such a low class of people denied to these converts the full privileges of a true believer. The contesting parties applied to their coreligionists in Persia for their advice and decision in the matter. The point made by those who

favoured the course of the new converts was that the Parsis of India who owned slaves for their work not only often had them admitted to the Mazdayasnian faith in accordance with the tenets of the religion, but also, without any religious scruples, partook of food prepared by them, and even permitted them, at the season festival, to prepare the sacred cakes used for consecration and sacrificial purposes. It was urged that having allowed the converted slaves all such rights of a true Zoroastrian in their lifetime, certain priests as well as laymen objected to the corpses of these slaves being deposited in the Towers of Silence when they died. The Iranian high priests, in replying to their inquiring brothers in India, advised them in the beginning to take precautionary measures in all such conversions that no harm should thereby be done to the religion and to the community. It was certainly an act of great merit, they proceeded, to purchase alien children and bring them up as Zoroastrians. It was unfair and highly objectionable, they added, nay it was an inexpiable sin, to refuse these unfortunate people all the privileges of a believer after once admitting them into the Zoroastrian religious fold. It is taught by the scriptures, they argued, that all mankind will be brought over to the religion of Mazda in the time of the future saviour prophets. It was, therefore, the pious duty of every true Zoroastrian to help this great cause by leading all to the path of righteousness. In the face of such commands, they concluded, those who denied to the proselytes the full rights of a faithful believer did not deserve to be called Zoroastrians.[1]

On another occasion, in reply to a question about the conversion of such low-class people, the Iranian informant wrote that even a man who dug graves or followed the profession of burning the dead (two inexpiable sins according to Zoroastrianism) should be admitted into the Zoroastrian fold, provided his admittance would not be harmful to the faith.[2]

The fear that the community might be swamped by the undesirable alien element was a reason why proselytizing fell into disfavour. We notice in that discussion that the different sections of the community were divided more on the social side of the question of proselytizing than on its religious side. The protest

[1] *Ithoter Rivayat.*
[2] *Bombay University Library Rivayat,* fol. 286a.

was chiefly based against the admixture of racial blood that the low class of the aliens introduced into the community. The Zoroastrians of Persia, who were trampled under the iron foot of their Moslem conquerors and had lived in a servile state, saw no objection whatsoever in receiving converts even from the lowest strata of the non-Zoroastrian peoples. But the case was different with the Indian Parsis, among whom the improved social and economic conditions had aroused a keen sense of racial pride and consciousness of their past greatness. A considerable portion of the community, it seems, looked with disapproval upon the introduction of the undesirable element of alien races into their small numbers. This strong feeling was aggravated the more through the fact that such converts who sought admission came always from the lowest classes. Members of the upper classes of the non-Zoroastrian communities were not heard knocking at the door of the Mazdayasnian fire-temples seeking admission. The community, it seems to us, thought it impolitic to attempt their conversion, and incur the displeasure of their neighbouring peoples. In fact, it was not disposed to any kind of active religious propaganda. The cases of conversion were consequently confined either to the slaves brought up in Parsi families or to the children born to Parsi fathers of their non-Zoroastrian mistresses. Proselytizing came to be associated with the low type of foreign element, and fell into disrepute.

A beginning of opposition to the idea of religious propaganda was thus made when the entire question of proselytizing came to be looked upon by the community with disfavour; and this beginning, as we shall see later, ultimately ended in an aversion to the idea by the major portion of the community.

CHAPTER XL

GUJARATI LITERATURE BEARING UPON ZOROASTRIANISM

The last native version of the Avesta independent of the influence of Western scholarship. So far the Parsi scholars had generally written in the Persian language, a knowledge of which was limited to a very narrow circle, and the general public accordingly did not profit by their work. The need had long been felt of producing theological literature in the language of the people, and several portions of the Persian Rivayats had already been done into Gujarati. These were followed during the early part of the last century by a Gujarati version of the Avestan texts, not from the original, but based on the Pahlavi, Sanskrit, and Persian renderings. This was the last native attempt to render the Avestan scriptures into another language through the medium of the Pahlavi translation. The Sanskrit, Persian, and Gujarati translators had all successively made their renderings on the basis of the traditional Pahlavi version; it was left for the modern philologists to approach the Avestan texts in the original itself, independently of the Pahlavi rendering though aided by it, and through the methods of strict linguistic science to give an independent and first-hand translation of the original Avestan texts.

Rendering of other Persian works into Gujarati. The Gujarati version of the Avesta was soon followed by a translation of some of the important Pazand-Persian works into Gujarati. The most popular among these were Jamaspi and Arda Viraf Namah. The prognostications of the former treatise fascinated the gentler sex, who were regaled by the recital of its contents from the lips of the family priest or of some male member of the family who happened to know the language. Viraf's account of the beatific visions of heaven and the horrors of hell appeared in illustrated lithographed editions. The pictures of the heavenly persons seated on golden thrones, and of the wicked falling headlong into hell to be gnawed by noxious creatures, served vividly

to bring the abstract ethical teachings before the mind of young and old. In the same connection, it may be added that the episodes of the Persian kings and warriors, handed down from antiquity by tradition, were rendered into Gujarati, and were most enthusiastically read or heard by all. This helped also to bring home to them the greatness and glory of their ancestors.

A PERIOD OF REVIVAL

NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER

CHAPTER XLI

THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING AMONG THE PARSIS

Awakening of the communal conscience. The advent of the British in India, and an era of peace, justice, and security of life and property, ushered in by them, opened a new page in the history of the Parsis. Having a ready scope, the means of adaptation, and also elasticity in their religion, they now began to assert their latent capacity, and soon emerged from the obscurity in which they had lived, to become henceforth the foremost people in India in matters educational, industrial, and social. They came in the vanguard of progress, amassed vast fortunes, and munificently gave away large sums in charity. This unprecedented economic prosperity helped the revival of learning among the Zoroastrians. The new epoch of the revival of learning gave new hopes for a period of formation and life. Various educational institutions had been founded, and the Parsis faced the problem of the responsibility of universal franchise in the world of letters. The average Parsi child of both the sexes entered the schools founded on European lines, and education on Western standards spread with accelerated rapidity.

The new knowledge profoundly modified the religious conceptions of the young. The inroads of Western ideas and culture undermined the old ideals, and modified many of the beliefs sanctified by ages. It was the opening of a new age for the Parsis, in which they witnessed the waning of the power of authority and the waxing of the demand for the verification of religious truths. The transition from the old to the new was bound to be disruptive. The new spirit that had taken hold of the community stirred it to its lowest depth. It threatened the community with an intellectual revolt from the new school. The reaction was bound to come, and come it did. It was violent, as all reaction is apt to be, and it ended in indifferentism. The popular creed failed to carry conviction to their intellect. They wanted to verify their doubts and refused to believe that which,

as they said, was revolting to reason. The glowing accounts of the reward and retribution of the materialized heaven and hell ceased to act upon the imagination of the educated classes. The imaginings of Viraf failed to exert any restraining influence over the tendency to sin. The inspired visions of this seer, about the scenes of the hereafter, depicting the pleasures of the souls of the blessed in paradise and the agonies of the wicked in hell, which satisfied the spiritual cravings of their elders for ages, failed longer so to do in the case of the new generation. The waters of Ardvisur had inundated the regions of hell and quenched the blazing fire, the horrors of hell had vanished into thin air, and the apocalyptic account of Viraf no longer presented to the minds of the enlightened youth what they had to the strictly orthodox. A treatment of the unfortunate souls, such as was portrayed traditionally, seemed to them monstrous, and subverting man's idea of the goodness of Ormazd. They thought them to be crude and archaic. The germs of new thought were sprouting among the young, and they viewed these theological problems with a changed attitude. They gradually became estranged from all beliefs that had been instilled into them from childhood.

An illiterate priesthood failed to satisfy the intellectual wants of the enlightened youth. The Parsi priesthood had long before degenerated into ignorance. The situation was not keenly felt so long as the laity was equally illiterate. But now when the latter sought enlightenment, the clergy had kept less and less abreast of the times. During the long period of twelve centuries, hardly twelve priests rose above mediocrity. The priest hitherto had acted as an intercessor between the layman and Ormazd, and through elaborate ritual had undertaken to gain for him divine help, being duly paid to recite penitential prayers for the expiation of the sins of the living, and to sacrifice for the purchase of paradise for the dead. The youth of the new school argued that there was no more need of the Mobad's mediation between him and his Heavenly Father. He demanded that the priest should act as a moral preceptor, a spiritual ministrant to his soul. This, in those times, the priest could not do. He could not widen his religious outlook and adapt himself to the demand of the younger generation.

The youth now grew up without religious instruction, and grad-

ually gravitated towards indifferentism. The apathy, callousness, and disregard towards religion on the part of the educated youth waxed stronger day by day, and culminated in an atmosphere of agnosticism that withered the beliefs in which they were brought up. Agnosticism became the threatening evil of the day.

CHAPTER XLII

INTRODUCTION OF THE WESTERN METHOD OF IRANIAN SCHOLARSHIP IN INDIA

Parsi scholarship at this period. To K. R. Kama, Parsi pioneer of the Iranian studies on Western lines in India, who had studied the Avestan texts in Europe under the German savant Spiegel, is due the credit of introducing among Parsi scholars the science of comparative philology and the scientific method of interpreting their sacred books. The inauguration of this new era belongs to the early part of the second half of the last century. Up to that time the Avestan texts had been almost wholly interpreted by the Zoroastrian authorities through the help of their Pahlavi translations. The original Avestan texts had remained largely unintelligible without the Pahlavi version. It was not then known that the Gathas were composed in metre, much less the fact that some other minor texts were also metrical. The rudiments of Avestan grammar that various inflections modified the meaning of a word had been a long forgotten fact. This was due to the circumstance that, owing to the inflectional poverty of the Pahlavi language, the translators had resorted to the use of particles and very often had even dropped this only means of indicating the syntactical relation of words in a sentence, and had contented themselves with rendering an inflected Avestan word by its uninflected, crude Pahlavi equivalent. Such, in short, was the deplorable state of Parsi scholarship when comparative philology came to its aid from the West and opened a new era of critical study in the field of Iranian researches.

Historical studies fared little better. Firdausi and other Moslem writers were the sole informants of the Parsi scholars regarding the ancient and legendary history of Iran. As these did not record the doings of the Achaemenian kings, the Parsi community remained without any inkling of the greatness and glory of the illustrious Parsi kings of the great Persian empire. European history had now for the first time startled the English-

educated Parsi youth with the information that there once flourished a mighty dynasty of rulers whom the modern Parsi can claim as his kith and kin. The truth had been denied for centuries to their legitimate descendants in India and Persia that a Cyrus or a Darius, a Xerxes or an Artaxerxes, who had carried the Persian banner in war to the farthest ends of the world, were historically their own coreligionists.

It was equally to Western scholarship that the Parsis owed the discovery and decipherment of the Old Persian Cuneiform Inscriptions. In vain did the august Farohar of Darius hover round the rock of Behistan for over two thousand years in pious expectation of some Parsi traveller who would one day trace his steps to this hallowed place, climb the rock to read the great king's record, make it known to the world, and thus earn the royal monarch's blessings whispered in the solemn silence by as many tongues as there were wedges and angles in the letters of the carved inscriptions.

Textual criticism brings startling revelations for the Parsis. The first outcome of the critical study of the Avestan literature, as may be judged from intimations given above, was the discovery made by the Western scholars that the grammar, style, and internal evidence of the extant Avestan texts show that they were not composed at a single period and by one person, but that they were the products of many persons who worked at various times. Scholars such as these undertook to determine the approximate dates of the component parts of the Avesta. The Gathas were shown to be the oldest in time of composition, and the authorship of a considerable portion, if not all, of these hymns was ascribed to Zoroaster himself. The prophet's work, it was said, was continued by his immediate disciples, and must have extended over a very long period after him, even though the immediate impression made by Zoroaster himself may be acknowledged to have become fainter in succeeding generations. The religion of the Younger Avesta had departed in certain respects from the religion of the Gathas, and the subsequent compositions showed signs of degeneration both in substance and style. The simple and abstract spirit of the Gathas was blurred if not lost, and the development of the later texts tended to become more complex and concrete. We breathe a different atmosphere, they declared, when we pass from the Gathic to the later Avestan

field. Nature-worship, which Zoroaster strove to supplant by a higher type of ethical religion, was shown to have been reinstated in these later texts. The Haoma cult, against which Zoroaster had inveighed, had been again incorporated into Zoroastrian ritual to conciliate the prejudices of the Magi. The masses could not be weaned from the false beliefs that loomed large in their eyes, and thus, the scholars maintained, many practices abolished by Zoroaster were later resuscitated by the clergy.

Startling indeed were these new ideas that philological researches brought to the Parsis, who had been accustomed to attribute indiscriminately all Avestan compositions to Zoroaster himself and who never approached their own sacred books with a historical perspective.

Back to the Gathas was the war-cry of the new school. This critical estimate of their scriptures by the Iranian scholars of the West greatly influenced the young Parsi scholars in India. They now hailed the Gathas as providing a self-sufficient religious system in themselves. They claimed to have discovered the only true mirror in which the genuine teachings of Zoroaster were reflected. The Later Avestan texts were declared to render nugatory the pristine purity. An exuberant outgrowth of dogmatic theology and ceremonial observances, they asserted, had supplanted the buoyant simplicity of the Gathic teachings, and simply represented a decline from the pure teachings of Zoroaster. The names of the Amshaspands in the Gathas were considered to be merely descriptive of the attributes of Ormazd. These attributes, they insisted, had crystallized into concrete beings, thus converting the monotheistic religion of Zoroaster into a veritable system of polytheism. Tradition, they urged, attributed to Zoroaster doctrines that he never preached. They advocated a return to the original purity of the faith by stripping off the accretions that had gathered round the pure canon of the prophet, thus removing the haze of ignorance and bigotry that had overclouded the light of their excellent religion.

All this was highly sacrilegious to orthodox ears. Such statements roused the strong resentment of the community and elicited vehement protests from priests and laymen alike. The new school was assailed on all sides. More sober opinion intervened to modify the sweeping assertions, and declared that while

the Gathas, of course, should be taken as the norm, there should also be admitted into the Zoroastrian canon such parts of the later scriptures as were in accord with the Gathic spirit; but whatever could not be traced to the Gathas was adventitious, and therefore not deserving of acceptance. The problem at once arose as to who was going to distinguish the authoritative from the unauthoritative and a new controversy opened amid still more bitter feelings.

A new theory to defend the Gathas from the accusation of dualism. The salient feature of dualism in the Iranian faith has ever been the chief point assailed by the non-Zoroastrians, both in ancient and modern times, whenever they have entered into religious disputations with the followers of the prophet. They have laid the doctrine of two gods to the charge of Zoroastrianism. The accidentals of the controversy have varied materially in their character at different periods, but the main point of contention has ever remained the same. We have already seen how vehemently the learned prelates of the Pahlavi period strove to vindicate this characteristic feature of the Zoroastrian teachings. Far from considering it a weak point, they hailed it as the only possible solution of the problem of evil. Not so their modern descendants. The repeated attacks of the Christian missionaries, and the strong influence of the Western literature, which hailed monotheism as the highest category of theology, brought about an unprecedented change in this belief; and so powerful has this influence been, that we hardly ever find even at this day any learned Parsi priest or layman marshalling arguments in vindication of the doctrine. Attempts are now generally made either to explain it away by ingenious arguments or to speak of it apologetically.

Haug was the first to bring it to the notice of the Parsis that the leading idea of the Gathas was monotheism. Ahura Mazda, he declared, is the supreme godhead, who has produced the two rival principles Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu as his twin spirits. Separated as they seem, they are united in action. They are indispensable to each other in the formation and conduct of the universe. They are the creative and destroying, constructive and destructive powers of God, and are as inseparable from each other as day and night. The opposition rests with the two rival spirits, and nowhere in the Gathas does Angra Mainyu,

the Evil Spirit, stand in direct opposition to Ahura Mazda. This fundamental distinction, he said, is lost sight of in the later period, and we find in the Vendidad that the Good Spirit Spenta Mainyu is identified with Ahura Mazda himself, and the Evil Spirit Angra Mainyu stands in direct antagonism to God. The Parsi scholars who were ever in search for some new arguments to remove the so-called weak point of their faith eagerly embraced this new explanation, which, they thought, saved the Gathas at least from the stain of dualism. If the Vendidad and other later works introduced it in the Zoroastrian theology, it was a decided fall, they claimed, from the original pure monotheism. The prophet himself never taught dualism, they argued, and it is unfair to ascribe that doctrine to him, for which the enlightened youth had to blush before modern criticism!

But more. It was even suggested by some of the interpreters that Angra Mainyu is not an evil spirit at all, because according to an explanation which they suggested he, in company with Spenta Mainyu, is called the protector, and Sraosha himself sacrificed unto him.[1] We should not have been surprised to-day if the doctors of the Zoroastrian church of earlier generations had branded such a statement as Ahrimanian, and classed it among the sins that are inexpiable for ever and ever.

[1] Ys. 57. 2.

CHAPTER XLIII

CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES ATTACK ZOROASTRIANISM

Indifferentism on the part of the Parsi youth arouses the proselytizing zeal of the Christian missionaries. These thought that they could easily turn the apathy of the newly educated Parsi youth for his own religion to interest in the faith of Jesus, if they could convince him of the superiority of Christianity over his national creed. The impressionable youth once secured, they imagined, would prove a valuable asset in bringing over his enlightened coreligionists to the Christian fold. Christianity would thus easily spread downwards among the masses, they thought, if only they could capture the upper educated classes. The missionaries felt that this handful of the progressive people, who approached nearest to the Western people in their modes of living, would ultimately be easily won over to their faith. With this object in view some of them began to study the Zoroastrian scriptures at first hand. They picked out what seemed to them to be vulnerable points in the Zoroastrian faith, and exposed them to the ridicule of the Parsi youth newly tinged with Western ideas. The community was alarmed at this aggression, the more so when a couple of converts were actually made to Christianity from this class.

Salient features of Zoroastrianism assailed by the missionaries. The religion of Zoroaster, the controversialists alleged, abounded in absurdities and incongruities. It was based on the idolatry of nature. The Parsi scholars repudiated the accusation with indignation, and said that in their reverence for the elements of nature they never worshipped fire, sun, and such other elements, but venerated the angels presiding over these noble productions of God, holding them to be his purest symbols.[1]

[1] A Parsi Priest, *Talim-i Zurtoosht,* p. 15, Bombay, 1840; Aspandiarji, *Hadie Gum Rahan* (Eng. version), p. 44, Bombay, 1841.

An erroneous rendering of Vd. 19. 9 had led Anquetil du Perron, the first translator of the Avestan texts into a European tongue, to depict Boundless Time as the first principle of the universe.[2] This interpretation was taken as an unequivocal testimony of the Zoroastrian scriptures to corroborate the statement of the Greek and Armenian writers who had alleged that both Ormazd and Ahriman had sprung from Time. Anquetil's mistake was repeated in the works of the European writers for a considerable time, until it was finally corrected by the unanimous verdict of the Iranian scholars of the West during the latter half of the last century. When the Zoroastrian scriptures were adversely criticized by the missionaries on the ground that the doctrine of Boundless Time at the apex of existence proved the derivative and secondary character of Ormazd,[3] the Parsi priests repudiated the charge and vigorously maintained that the concept simply designated eternity and nothing more. Far from being Ormazd's superior, Boundless Time, they affirmed, was his creation.

More heated was the controversy that hinged upon the alleged belief of two rival spirits. We have already seen how dualism has been the main question of inveterate controversies; we shall here only advert to it in passing. When the missionaries derisively called the Parsis the worshippers of two gods, which certainly they never were, they at once vehemently denied the charge and hastened to repudiate it by denying downright an objective existence to Ahriman. The Evil Spirit, they argued, is not an entity, but merely the symbolic personification of evil nature in man owing his origin to man's errant thoughts. Outside of man he has no existence at all. He is a gratuitous invention. The concept of his existence is purely negative, a chimera. He is man's creation, as are also the infernal host of demons and fiends, which are nothing more than the lusts and passions of man.[4]

Parsi apologists meet the charges of their opponents by resorting to allegorical explanations. This attempt at giving allegorical interpretations of the scriptures was carried still further. Tradition had always seen some geographical data in

[2] *Zend-Avesta,* vol. 1, p. 414; vol. 2, p. 592, Paris, 1771.
[3] Wilson, *The Parsi Religion,* p. 134. Bombay, 1843.
[4] A Parsi Priest, *Talim-i-Zurtoosht,* pp. 62-64, 83, 84; Aspandiarji, *Hadie Gum Rahan* (Eng. version), pp. 35-37, 73, 74.

the first chapter of the Vendidad, and modern scholarship had accepted that view; but in their polemics with the missionaries the Parsi scholars explained the opening of the chapter by asserting that the act of Ormazd in creating Iran Vej, the first region of the world, was to be interpreted as a mere figurative expression for religious faith, and Ahriman's countercreation of winter was emblematic of infidelity. Similarly, the various places said to have been created by Ormazd indicated man's body, and the obnoxious creatures of Ahriman signified man's evil passions.[5] Another instance of the same kind of interpretation may be cited. Druj Nasu, or the Demon of Defilement, is spoken of in the Vendidad as taking possession of a man who has touched the corpse of a dog or a man,[6] and a minute description is given as to how the demon is successively driven out from the top of the head of the defiled person to the tips of his toes, as the ablution ceremony is being performed. This rite was criticized as being revolting to common sense.[7] Instead of defending it on hygienic principles, the learned controversialists again expatiated upon the mystic significance of the text, and alleged that the whole ceremony referred to the internal purification of man, and that Nasu represented his evil nature, while the successive expulsion of the fiend from one part of the body to another, until finally eradicated, meant the gradual improvement of man's character.[8] Zoroastrianism teaches that the sin of burying corpses is inexpiable.[9] The pulling down of the dakhmas, wherein lie interred the dead bodies of such men, is a means of the expiation of one's sins in thought, word, and deed; and is equivalent to the recital of a Patit.[10] Responding to a criticism on this passage, recourse was again taken to declare it as couched in mysterious language. It was curiously explained to mean that the dakhma referred to the body of man, the corpse stood for his evil passions, its disinterment meant the expulsion of the evil propensities, and the final exposure to the light of the sun signified the enlightenment of the inner man by the divine wisdom.[11]

[5] A Parsi Priest, *Talim-i Zurtoosht,* pp. 35, 36.
[6] Vd. 8. 35-71.
[7] Wilson, *The Parsi Religion,* p. 161.
[8] Aspandiarji, *Hadie Gum Rahan* (Eng. Version), p. 74; A Parsi Priest, *Talim-i-Zurtoosht,* p. 180.
[9] Vd. 1. 12; 3. 38, 39.
[10] Vd. 7. 51; 13. 57.
[11] Aspandiarji, *Hadie Gum Rahan,* pp. 79, 80.

The outcome of this controversy. The Parsis further retaliated by seizing upon the weak points of the Christian scriptures and turning them into ridicule. Theological questions were thus discussed with acrimonious zeal on both sides, and a considerable polemic literature was produced. The good that came out of this controversy was that the study of their own religion began to be prosecuted by the Parsi priests with greater avidity than before.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE REFORM MOVEMENT

Crusade against the non-Zoroastrian practices engrafted upon Zoroastrianism. The compromises and concessions made on the part of the early Parsi settlers in India were needed to conciliate the prejudices of the Hindu rulers. The Parsis were a handful of people living in the midst of the teeming millions of India, and even the twelve centuries of their residence in this country have failed to merge them in the ocean of Indian humanity. This fact is largely due to their intensely communal spirit, fostered by the dread of being assimilated into greater communities, and of thus losing their individuality. Zoroastrianism stands for self-assertion. Despite their insignificant numbers, the inherent and dominant characteristics of the Parsis made them self-sufficient in the midst of the Hindus of Gujarat, whose religious ideals were self-surrender and self-renunciation. But the average Parsi did not fail to borrow many superstitious customs and habits from the Hindus as well as from the Muhammadans during the later period. The Hindu augur and the Moslem diviner became important factors in the family life of the Parsis. These seers were called in to cast the horoscope of the new-born Zoroastrian child; they foretold the future, administered amulets to heal every sickness and disease in the family, prescribed charms to ward off the evil eye, exorcised demoniacal influences from persons possessed by the powers of darkness, and, in many ways, proved indispensable auxiliaries to a Parsi from birth to death. The mediation of a Brahman or of a Mullah was often rated higher than that of a Mobad, and a Sanskrit *mantra* or an Arabic *kalma* was regarded more efficacious for the purchase of heavenly boons than an Avestan *mānthra*. The Zoroastrian priest ruled in the fire-temple, but the non-Zoroastrian priest had a powerful sway over the hearts of the Parsi populace. With rich offerings did the faithful repair to the tombs of Moslem saints and to Hindu shrines. The

grandeur of the Mazdayasnian teachings had faded, and Zoroaster had partly ceased to be a living force in the spiritual life of the community.

Many alien customs had thus worked their way into Zoroastrianism. These were hard facts for the orthodox to admit, but they were facts all the same. With the vigour of youth and with unquenchable zeal the reformers of that day undertook to liberate the community from the thraldom of superimposed non-Zoroastrian customs, and to wean it from superstitions.

The reformers protested against reciting their prayers parrot-wise in an unintelligible language. The Avesta language had long since fallen into disuse. It was not a living language. Yet the belief in its being of celestial origin, the tongue in which Ormazd addressed his heavenly court, and even that in which Ahriman harangued his ribald crew, had preserved it as the only true vehicle for conveying prayers. The reformers now argued that it was meaningless to mumble an unintelligible gibberish which neither the priest himself nor the layman understood. Ejaculations and genuflexions were of no avail, when they recited their prayers in a dead language. No amount of such formulas would affect the character of the devotees and ennoble their thoughts. A prayer that had no subjective value was no prayer. It failed to awaken any ethical fervour, for a truly devout prayer should spur the spirit within to a higher life. This was not possible so long as the priest perfunctorily droned prayers, not a word of which was understood.

The orthodox vehemently retorted that the Avestan language was divine, and as such it possessed inherent magical efficacy. Miraculously composed as these Avestan prayers were, they had indescribable objective value, it was claimed, quite independent of the motive of one who recited them. The mere utterance of the sacred texts, without knowing in the least what they meant, would produce marvellous effect. The ultra-orthodox viewed the situation with pious dread and entertained serious apprehension that, if once the community permitted the use of Gujarati or English compositions for daily prayers, nothing short of a revolutionary change would come, and with the lapse of time the Avestan texts would be supplanted by prayer-books composed in the modern vernaculars. The reformers pointed out that there already existed some *monājāt* prayers

composed in Persian by some of the learned Dasturs even in their own lifetime, which the orthodox were using without any scruple at the end of their daily Avestan prayers.

A fierce controversy raged around this question, with the result that the orthodox went on praying in their own way, and the reformers, neither having faith in the recital of their prayers in an unintelligible language nor having a proper substitute to satisfy their demand, went without prayers of any kind. And the situation remains, in large measure, unchanged up to this very day.

The Avestan text metamorphosed into an ungrammatical jargon. The reformers further said that the Avestan texts were recited with the most incorrect pronunciations. In vindication of their statement they quoted passages from the original texts and put by their side the corrupt formulas in vogue in the community. An example of this kind may not be out of place here, and we shall insert the text of Ahunavar, the most important Zoroastrian formula, first in its correct form and then in the corrupt form which obtains among a considerable portion of the community up to this hour. The original formula is as follows:—

yathā ahu vairyo athā ratush ashāt chit hachā vangheush dazdā manangho shyaothananām angheush Mazdāi khshathremchā ahurāi ā yim dregubyo dadat vāstārem.

The corrupt form of the same:—

athāu veryo thāre tose sāde chide chāvanghoise dezdā manengho sotthenanām anghyos Mazdāe khosetharamchāe orāe āiyem daregobyo daredar vāstārem.

This, however, did not trouble the orthodox, for they complacently remarked that as long as they had implicit faith in what they recited, and recited it whole-heartedly, it mattered very little whether they used correct pronunciation or not. Ormazd looked to their hearts, and not to their sense of grammar and orthography. So long as their motives were good, their prayers were acceptable to the Heavenly Father.

The redeeming feature of this entire controversy has been that of late there is a growing tendency in the community to avail

itself of the help of the philologist, who has brought nearer home to them the correct and carefully edited version of their sacred scriptures, and they have consequently begun to recite their daily prayers from books that have based their texts on the standard and authorized version of the liturgy.

Too much ritualism, protested the reformer. The mechanical handling of the ritual, which was as much unintelligible in its real purport to the priest who performed it as it was to the layman who ordered it, failed to satisfy the new school. The orthodox maintained that although the priestly authorities themselves had lost the key of the mysteries of the ceremonies and were unable to understand their meaning, nevertheless untold good accrued to those who devoutly ordered such ceremonies for their own merit. They entertained a pious hope that the lost key would some day be recovered, and the hidden secrets brought to the light of day.

The reformers urged that a vast structure of formalism and ritual had replaced the edifice of the simple faith, and religion had simply turned into ritualism. They dwelt especially on the subjective value of the ritual, and argued that however elaborate and expensive the ceremony might be, it was of no value if it failed to symbolize a moral idea for the faithful who ordered it. Ceremonial observances, they complained, were given greater importance than moral observance. Righteousness was identified with rituals. They were only a clothing of religion, but the ethical substance of religion was of greater importance than the clothing itself. Religion, they urged, does not consist in laying up merit by ceremonials. The orthodox retorted that the ritual as such had an intrinsic value and inherent merit, and the more such rites were performed, the greater was the merit assured to the faithful. The new school said that these ceremonials may perhaps serve as a means of conveying ethical ideas to a backward people, but the Parsis were not a backward people. Hence they did not need them. Righteousness did not depend upon such ceremonial observances, but upon the purity of man's inner life. Besides, the ceremonials became an economic drain on the slender resources of the credulous poor, who incurred heavy debts for their performance, which was displeasing in the sight of Ormazd. The orthodox declared these statements an Ahrimanian onslaught upon the Mazdayasnian rites.

The progressives denounce the intercessory prayers for the dead. The philological researches had for the first time brought to the notice of the Parsis the fact of the sharp distinction between man's soul and his Farohar. From what has been stated in earlier pages, it can be clearly seen how this essential difference was lost sight of, as early as during the later Pahlavi period. The soul and the Farohar were taken to be one and the same by the Zoroastrians before the philologist pointed out the error. Priest and layman, the learned and the illiterate alike, believed implicitly that the souls of the dead profited by the ceremonials performed in their honour by their relatives in this world. The Avestan and Pahlavi passages, which speak of the coming of the Farohars to earth at the period of the Fravardigan festival, seeking invocation and sacrifice, were understood by the entire community as indubitably referring to the coming of the souls of the dead.[1]

According to the general conviction, the supplications offered by the living procured either a remission of the sins committed by the deceased in this world, or else a specific merit for the good deeds he had done. It was this strong faith in the efficacy of the ceremonials to help the struggling soul in either making its way out of hell, or in ascending upwards through the graded heavens in the next world, that inspired the loving and dutiful survivors to order elaborate rituals for the spiritual welfare of the departed. Propitiatory offerings were made, and penitential prayers were recited to secure a better lot for the souls of the dead, and the performance of these periodical rites was most zealously observed. Rich viands were consecrated in the name of the deceased. Whatever kind of food or drink the departed ones had best liked in life were specially prepared. On the last day of the festival, moreover, when the souls were believed to leave this world and return to that beyond, food and drink were offered them to assuage the hunger and thirst on their return journey, while money in copper and silver was dedicated to them to meet their travelling expenses.

The recital of the Patit, or expiatory prayer, forms an important part of the ceremonies performed in honour of the dead. The relatives and friends of the deceased still engage a priest

[1] K. M. Modi, *Kholase Majdiasne,* pp. 91-95, 101-106, Bombay, 1853; *Suryoday,* vol. 2, pp. 113-117, 158-161, Bombay, 1868.

to recite it, and do the same themselves for the expiation and welfare of the soul when it is embarking on its journey to the next world after death. The devout generally keep up this observance daily for at least a month, or throughout the first year, or in many cases for a still longer period.

The reformers took up the question and said that Zoroastrianism enjoined that a man went to the abode of weal or woe according to his deserts, and that no amount of ceremonials performed by the living could either mitigate his sufferings or improve his condition in the spiritual world. His sins could not be atoned for by elaborate rituals performed in his name, nor would he be one whit the happier for them. It is true, they further said, that according to the scriptures, the benefit of the ceremonials performed for the dead accrues to the soul during the first three nights after death, while it still hovers over the body, but from the period of the dawn of the fourth day, when justice is administered to the soul, and it is awarded its special place, the rituals do not affect its position. Any ceremonies performed after this day, that is, on the monthly and yearly anniversaries or on any other occasions, are mainly for the Farohar of the dead man, and not for his soul. In fact, it was claimed, these rites are more for the interest of the living than for the imagined interest of the dead. Zoroastrianism, they said, never stood for any kind of vicarious salvation, for the question of salvation or damnation rested on the individual's own deeds. Neither would the expiatory prayers recited by the living wash out the sins of the dead, nor would the propitiatory sacrifices offered by them induce the heavenly judges to revoke their decision. As the man sows, so shall he reap, is the immortal truth taught by Zoroaster. Merit, they contended, cannot be purchased at a price, and sin cannot be expiated by proxy. It was destroying the true spirit of the prophet's great religion to entertain such degrading ideas of vicarious expiation which had been fastened on Zoroastrianism.

These scathing criticisms seriously wounded the religious susceptibilities of the orthodox, who became unsparing in the vehement denunciation of the reformers, charging them as reactionaries with carrying the religious barque to ruin. They branded the attempts of the reformers as blasphemous and as an irreverent prying into the divine work of Ormazd. Bitter words

were exchanged between the rival parties, and abuses and invectives, ridicule and obloquy, became rampant.

The reformers inveigh against holding woman impure during her menses. A woman during this period is supposed to be possessed of the demons. She is made to retire to a secluded part of the house, staying away from every object that might be polluted by her touch, lest she should defile them by contact. Her food is served to her from a distance so that she may not touch the utensils. Even her look defiles a consecrated object, just as her touch pollutes it. Her glance that might chance to fall upon one engaged in prayers nullifies his devotional utterances. Her approach to a holy place of worship desecrates it. The Avestan and Pahlavi works are full of rigorous prescriptions on this subject.

The new school assailed this practice as an outcome of rank superstition. They declared that the periodical flow of blood during the menses was a normal monthly sickness of woman. It was no more than a periodical disease. At the most woman needed rest during this period, and the elders, with the hygienic principles in mind, it was pointed out, had framed such rigorous rules, and put them under a religious guise, in order to insure implicit obedience from an ignorant people who neither understood the rules for the preservation of bodily health, nor cared for them. Modern society, they said, with its profounder knowledge of hygiene, no longer needed such archaic injunctions. It was debasing woman to taboo her as unclean and impure at such a time. It was ruthless to prevent her, according to the custom that obtained, from having even a last look at any one who happened to die in her house during her menses. It was bad theology, they vehemently argued, which deprived an unfortunate woman even of the opportunity of resting her loving eyes on the remains of her dead husband, or child, on the ground of a superstitious plea that her look would exercise an unwholesome influence on the soul of the dead, and seriously disturb it during the time of severing its final connection with the body.

This attitude towards an established belief greatly wounded the feelings of the faithful, who cursed the new knowledge that had so perverted the minds of the younger generation, while others held that too much ado was made over a question that would die a natural death with the advance of real enlighten-

ment. Left to the workings of time, they maintained, social and intellectual progress would soon relegate the custom to oblivion.

Controversy over the religious practice of using the urine of cattle. The very first thing that a Parsi is expected to do immediately after leaving his bed is to take a handful of bull's, or cow's, or she-goat's urine and, upon reciting a spell composed in Pazand, to rub it over his face, hands, and feet. The reformer declared that the filthy practice was highly objectionable, and should be done away with. This shocked the sentiment of righteousness in the orthodox believer. He retorted that the liquid had great purifying qualities, and its use should be continued. The reformer replied that it may indeed have served as a disinfectant for humanity in its infancy, but in these days of better and purer appliances for bodily cleanliness we need no more of the dirty stuff. But the liquid, expostulated the orthodox, has other latent qualities too. It repels the demoniac powers that happen to take possession of man during sleep; what greater proof, in truth, of its mysterious power can be had than the fact that when once consecrated it never becomes putrid? Tracts and pamphlets were issued on both sides, and a heated controversy ensued in the Parsi press. The reformer to-day has given up the practice altogether, but the orthodox continues still most scrupulously to use it every morning.

The good sense of the disputants saves the community from being split into sects. The reformers were termed the Parsi Protestants and were charged with thinking in terms of Christianity. They were said to be fired by the sole ambition of being original, and of setting at naught the achievements of their elders for the last three thousand years. The reformers replied that they were simply looking to antiquity for models for their conduct and were profiting solely by the vast experience of the past. But at the same time, they rejoined, the orthodox should remember that the ancients had tackled the religious and ceremonial questions that arose in their own days according to light that had prevailed in the past. Those of that day had not done the thinking for all times to come, with injunctions to the future generations to act in strict accordance with them. They alone had not the monopoly to think, and had not given the final mandate to acquiesce in all that they had believed. Besides, a return to the past could not bring unalloyed happiness to the

Parsis in the present times. The community, it was urged, cannot afford to transplant itself back to the age of the Vendidad. There was no use sticking to outworn forms and seeking to give them a new lease of life. It was futile to attempt to support delusions, and the orthodox, they said, should not throw all possible shackles in the way of progress by hampering and paralyzing the well-meant efforts of the new school.

Such, in brief form, is the story of the opening of the conflict between conservative and free thought among the Parsis in India, which rent the community into two sections. The rival parties, however, did not make any formal division between themselves. The reformers did not venture to contemplate so complete a break with the orthodox as would culminate in the establishment of a reformed Church. The orthodox could not excommunicate the reformers even if they would. The orthodox had to content themselves with condemning the reformers, and the reformers by satirizing the orthodox. Even to-day the main disputes over some of these vital problems remain much the same as they were six decades ago, and the battle goes on, still to be won.

CHAPTER XLV

PARSI THEOSOPHISTS

Inquiring minds seek a deeper meaning of life. At this period of transition, when the old practices seemed to have spent their force, and the younger generation was drifting towards indifference in religious matters, there were other forces at work which heralded the rise of a new class of dissenters. Those of a prosaic and matter-of-fact turn of mind in the community had steadily doubted the statements that did not admit of a rational justification, and refused to believe in anything mysterious and mystical in religion. But human life cannot altogether be stripped of mystery. Rationalism is not the whole of human nature. Besides, the state of doubts and disbeliefs that prevailed in the community could not last long. Man is essentially a religious being. He feels an inherent need in himself for some form of religious belief which would satisfy the yearnings of his spirit—that irrepressible heart-hunger of the human soul.

The Parsi priesthood, as custodians of the conscience of the community, zealously guarded and conserved the dogmatic teachings and traditions, but they were unable to work for the adaptation of the traditional material to the contemporary situation. They were incapable, at the time, of helping the community in its religious crisis. Persons who thought that the rationalism of the new school ignored an essential part of human nature when it discarded the emotional side of man, to which man was indebted for some of his noblest virtues, yearned for new light. If that light did not come from within, they would welcome it from without. At this juncture the Theosophical Society opened its propaganda in India, and a number of Parsis eagerly embraced the movement.

The mode of living of the Parsi theosophists is more austere than that of their neighbours. In the early eighties of the last century the Parsi members of the Theosophical Society

entered the arena of religious controversy and gave new zest to it. Since that time, or during the last three decades, they have produced a fairly considerable literature in Gujarati, and are at present a potent factor in shaping the religious beliefs of a section of the community through their active propaganda. Hitherto ritual observances, theological dogmas, and ecclesiastical usages had occupied a most conspicuous place in the religious controversies. The Parsi theosophists have introduced metaphysical themes such as the nature of Being, a personal or an impersonal God, creation or emanation, reincarnation, and such like for discussion. This is significant as an indication of a higher phase in religious polemics. They have shown a strong tendency towards mysticism in religion. They do not flee from the sight and sound of man and withdraw themselves to the fastness of the jungle, nor do they mortify their flesh, but their code of ethics comprises the ascetic virtues, tempered by the spirit of the age. Celibacy is held to be the primal virtue. The stringency of the commandment is relaxed, it is true, in the case of the members of the exoteric section and that of the less ambitious members of the esoteric section of the cult; but it is strictly enjoined upon those who aspire to the higher planes of existence. The prospect of some day crossing the threshold of the lower plane deters many a Zoroastrian youth in India from entering into the hallowed state of matrimony, and raises a class of Parsi celibates. Modern society has sanctioned social service, and the Parsi theosophists have not been slow in embodying it in their code of morals. In their early days, when they were not strong enough in number and influence, they contented themselves with retiring, more or less, within themselves, and with living as silent dissenters; but with growing strength, they have been seen of late actively working to propagate their ideas. Proselytizing zeal has made them aggressive; and despite their frequent protestations to the contrary theirs is certainly a sectarian creed. They are as much bound by the oath of allegiance to the hard and fast rules of their esoteric circle as are the clergy of any religion to its rigid dogmas.

The Parsi theosophists abstain from animal food. We have already referred to the sect of the Parsi ascetics of the seventeenth century who lived exclusively on the products of the earth; and individual instances of Zoroastrians abstaining from

meat diet altogether are not wanting. Sporadic attempts to preach vegetarianism have been made from time to time down to the present, and not a few works on the subject actually were printed as early as the middle of the last century.

But it was left for the Parsi theosophists of our own time to open an organized crusade against the use of animal food. In their zeal for investing their statements with religious sanction, they have collected passages from the Iranian scriptures showing compassionate tenderness to the animal kingdom, and have argued on the strength of these that Zoroastrianism forbids flesh-eating. The dishes of animal food that their coreligionists place in their ceremonies are declared to repel the angels and to attract the demons. When it is pointed out to these zealous controversialists that the Zoroastrian writings of all periods abound in passages to the contrary, they say that these passages do not convey the meaning that the philologists attribute to them, but are full of mystic and occult sense. When again they are led to see that their arguments on this point are untenable, and that they cannot safely retreat behind the mystic and occult interpretations to explain away the texts as allegories, they retort that the Iranian world was in the wrong throughout the various epochs of its history. Zoroaster, they add, could never have encouraged this carnivorous habit among mankind, which entails so much agony and suffering. Justice and kindness to the sentient creatures demand that man should not fatten his flesh by the flesh of innocent beings, but should have regard for life in general and should realize that he has no right to inflict pain and death upon dumb creatures. Animal slaughter for food is not consistent with the commandment of compassion to animals. But, above all, animal food is unclean. Man's spiritual growth is stunted by it, and the eating of animal food, as incompatible with righteousness, forms an insurmountable barrier to the spiritual development of man. No amount of piety can redeem him, and no austerities can free him from damnation. The movement is gaining ground among a considerable portion of both sexes in the community.

Zoroastrianism, however, has no scruples against a meat diet. Not only did meat form an ordinary article of consumption by the laity as well as by the clergy from the earliest days, but viands prepared of meat were consecrated at the ritual in

honour of the celestial beings as well as of the dead. Such was the case at all different periods of Iranian history, as proved by the scriptural texts themselves and from other sources, and such is the case to-day.

Although the Zoroastrian Church has never countenanced the vegetarian movement, there are certain occasions when meat diet is avoided. For example, a considerable portion of the community has not, for ages, partaken of meat on four days of every month, which are dedicated to the angel Bahman, the genius of cattle on the material side, and to his associates, Mohor, Gosh, and Ram. Long usage, moreover, prescribes that the members of a family in which death has occurred shall abstain from meat food for three consecutive days. Disregard of the practice is regarded as a sin in a Rivayat.[1]

Time has wrought some change in the manner of consecrating meat offerings in the ceremonials. Up to the middle of the last century the priest consecrated the fresh tongue, the jaw, and the left eye of the sacrificial animal to the angel Hom, just as his ancestors, in accordance with a chapter in the Hom Yasht of the Yasna, did in the days of remote antiquity. The learned Gujarati versionist of the Yasna in the middle of the last century inveighs against this practice, and allegorically explains the passages, Ys. 11. 4, 5, that served as authority for the custom.[2] The custom of offering such a portion of flesh no longer prevails. It was similarly the practice until very recently with the officiating priest to slaughter a goat with his own hands on the third day after the death of a person, and to dedicate the fat to the fire on the dawn of the fourth day when the soul of the deceased person migrated to the next world.[3] This custom likewise has now become obsolete.

Custodians of the only key to Zoroastrianism. Zoroaster and his disciples, the theosophical interpreters tell us, wrote in a mystic language which conveys a double meaning. The exoteric, or surface meaning, is intended for the vulgar, and the esoteric, or inner meaning, is designed only for the initiates. The adepts of various periods are the ones who possess the mysterious key to the chamber of hidden truths. The last of such Parsi adepts was Azar Kaivan, who died at Patna in 1614. With his death

[1] Marzbanji, *Ithoter Rivayat,* p. 155, Bombay, 1846.
[2] Aspandiarji, *Ijashne ba maeni,* p. 101, Bombay, 1849.
[3] Marzbanji, *Ithoter Rivayat,* pp. 125-127.

this key was lost. Occult science alone, it was asserted, could explain and vindicate the allegorical teachings of Zoroaster. Providence has blessed the founders of the Theosophical Society with the possession of a master-key that opens the secret chambers of the hidden knowledge of all religions. In pious submission to the mandates of the hidden Mahatmas of Tibet, who have handed it over to them and who have initiated them into the deepest secrets of existence, the inspired leaders of the society have undertaken the mighty work of applying the key to all religions—Zoroastrianism being one of them—in order to unravel the mysteries of the esoteric teachings. Their claim to be in direct communication with the divine beings is not questioned by the Parsi members of the society. The latter are fascinated by the statements of the adepts, who with astounding confidence and ease describe in detail the affairs of the world of spirits with as much familiarity as one would speak of the inmates of the adjoining house.

The Mahatmas of the White Lodge of the Himalayan Brothers, as they are called, guard the sacred scriptures in subterranean libraries. The lost Nasks, we are informed, will one day be restored to the Parsis, their legitimate owners, when they shall have prepared themselves for it through the teachings of the Theosophical Society. Even now those members of the esoteric section of the Theosophical Society that have developed the occult powers are initiated into the mysteries and already permitted to read these hidden records. The knowledge that they therefore disclose to the outer world is based on certainty. For instance, the Avestan scholar, basing his arguments on historical and philological proofs, places the age of Zoroaster from about 700 to 1000 B.C., but the theosophist with his occult knowledge asserts that he flourished 20,000 B.C. The scholar may call it extravagant and fantastic, but the initiated knows it to be a fact that can be verified by occult science. Thus gradually will the theosophists succeed in unearthing the buried truths with the help of the master-key.

Investing Zoroastrianism with a philosophical garb. The religious system of Zoroaster is theological rather than philosophical. This theological aspect of their faith does not satisfy the Parsi theosophists. They attempt to convert their faith into religious metaphysics with the object of giving it a rational

aspect. They aim at an adjustment of the fundamental Zoroastrian concepts according to the standard philosophy of their society, which is an eclectic system drawing its materials mostly from Hinduism and Buddhism, and which is subversive of the basic principles of Zoroastrianism. The different philosophical principles and theological doctrines of various religions are the distinguishing features by which one religion is marked out as separate from another. Would this philosophical garb, then, made of non-Zoroastrian materials, add anything to the inherent excellence of Zoroastrianism?

Philosophy attempts to give a rational solution, based on human observation and experimentation, of various problems, which religion claims to solve on the authority of prophetic revelation. This common object of the two makes philosophy and religion most closely interrelated to each other. Philosophy by itself can never be an all-sufficient source of satisfying the religious needs of man. The divorce of religion from the daily life of man creates a blank in the human mind, and philosophy cannot fill it. It may indeed add to the rational completion of a religion, but it can never act as a substitute for faith. Philosophy is frequently appealed to in order to vindicate religious truths; and when the inroads of scepticism weaken man's faith in religion the help of philosophy is often sought with a view to strengthen the traditional beliefs. In this capacity it becomes the helpmate of religion; but the friendly relations do not always remain unbroken. Religion has fixed canons, binding traditions. Its tendency is to put a lasting stamp on the doctrines for all times. It rests upon the teachings of a prophet, and nourishes them as an unchangeable heritage. Philosophy, on the other hand, progresses with the times, and ever encourages fresh inquiry. It always revolts from every kind of dogmatic teaching. New questions crop up, and the field of investigation is filled with divergent answers. Hence there is no system of philosophy which can claim absolute truth. There are as many philosophies as there are philosophers. These come and go, and with them the cradle of the speculative thought is ever swinging to and fro. Religion teaches to believe, philosophy teaches to doubt. Religion, therefore, does not reap unqualified success when it tries to adapt its doctrines to the system of philosophy current at a period, in order to meet the intellectual wants of the en-

lightened classes. When it thus links its destiny with philosophy, it incurs the risk of losing its equilibrium, and is forced to shift its position at every new wave of philosophical thought.

But to return from this digression. The established theology of the Zoroastrian Church, based on the deductions from the revealed truth of Zoroaster, of which it was the sole arbiter, retained its corporate character. Instances were not wanting wherein individuals subscribed to certain philosophical sects. For example, Masudi informs us that Tansar, the illustrious Dastur of Ardashir, was deeply imbued with the doctrines of Plato.[4] Independent attempts, however, on the part of such individuals at the philosophical secularization of their scriptures were discouraged by the Iranians. Religion and philosophy did not proceed hand in hand in Iran. Indian and Greek philosophies were not unknown to the Iranians, for there was a constant interchange of ideas between Persia on one side and India and Greece on the other, as ever since the days of Pythagoras Greek and Indian philosophers frequented the Persian court. Plotinus, the great neo-Platonist philosopher, had come to Persia during the early period of the Sasanians. The philosophers driven away from the court of Justinian, when that emperor prohibited the teaching of philosophy and finally closed the philosophical schools in Athens A.D. 529, had taken refuge at the latitudinarian court of Noshirvan. This king was a great patron of letters, and the literary luminaries of the civilized world flocked to his court. Many philosophical works, along with those on science and literature, were translated from Sanskrit and Greek into Pahlavi at the royal command. But we do not find any systematic attempt at interpreting the Zoroastrian religion in the light of such philosophies. Even in their polemics with the great heresiarchs or the learned divines of the rival faiths and creeds, the established church never availed itself of this help. In fact the utilitarian genius of the Persians led them to disparage metaphysical speculation as a vain attempt at the impracticable.

Religion should be such that its ideals can be applied to our workaday world. Its teachings should be applicable to the exigencies of daily life. It should find expression in all the small and great acts of man's life. Its influence on the life of the

[4] Darmesteter, *Lettre de Tansar au roi de Tabaristan,* in JA., vol. 144, p. 186.

individual should not be casual and spasmodic, but constant. It should be a living and a working factor, not a mere accident in life. Pure philosophy could not do this. Abstruse problems of philosophy appeal more to the reason than to the imagination, and therefore cannot affect the masses who are greatly moved by imagination. Philosophical disquisition and metaphysical theories are inaccessible to the commonplace understanding; but religion is for the generality of mankind. This is the characteristic of Zoroastrianism through its very simplicity, and the application of its simple religious theories to the practical life of the community has made it great.

The theosophists attempt to construct a scientific basis for Zoroastrianism. The Parsi theosophists ransack the Zoroastrian texts in search for a possible clue to interpret every new scientific discovery of to-day and assert in vague statements that the sacred books anticipated the discovery by centuries, and that the scientific world is only now being ultimately drawn to this truth. Thus, they maintain, they keep Zoroastrianism abreast of the times, and by thus adapting the ancient writings to the latest modern inventions they help to make the religion of Zarathushtra acceptable to the enlightened youth of to-day.

In this connection it may frankly be acknowledged that the new discoveries in the field of scientific research have given a rude shock to the old-time inherited theories, and a cosmology like that of the Bundahishn stands controverted in the light of modern knowledge. Its twelve thousand years, as the avowed age of the universe, have long elapsed from the epoch when Ormazd first began the great work of creation, but the end is not yet come. Ormazd, as is now conceded, did not create this world in six successive periods that made a year of three hundred and sixty-five days. Furthermore, the earth is not fixed in the centre of the universe like the yolk in the egg, nor is it eternally stationary, nor does the sun revolve around the earth. These and many like theories to interpret the laws of nature were attuned to the intellectual atmosphere of the different ages that originated them. These ancient views are the individual opinions of the physicists of the Avestan and Pahlavi periods, and should not be credited with divine inspiration, as men have often erroneously done. Religion is not a repository of physical science, and such theories do not form part of Zoroastrianism. The ethical prin-

ciples of Zarathushtra transcend all time. They are the eternal elements that constitute his religion.

The theosophists summarily reject the method of the philologist adopted in interpreting the sacred texts. In their zeal for discovering great truths buried under the seemingly simple texts, but really pregnant with deep meaning, these esoterics have often been inclined to invest legends and myths with a symbolic significance, and much that could be relegated to the realm of poetry has been included in the sphere of serious literature. The theosophical writers among the modern Parsis have alleged that the philologists, being bound by the fetters of literalism in the interpretation of the sacred texts, generally take a statement at its face value and adhere to the surface meaning. The theosophists choose to lean upon the miraculous and mysterious, rather than to follow the recognized canons of the method of reasoning. The sense of proportion, critical acumen, the historical sense, accurate thinking, and such preliminary requisites of modern scholarship are conspicuous by their absence in the interpretations of most of the Parsi theosophists. Flashes of vague thought are regarded as inspiration, and visions are taken for verities.

Passage after passage in the Zoroastrian scriptures has been explained to signify what it does not mean in the original. The following may be adduced as a specimen:—The pastoral people in Ancient Iran had found a faithful sentinel in the dog, and that animal, as shown by the Avesta, occupied an exalted place among the Iranians from the earliest ages; three chapters of the Vendidad in fact were devoted to this indispensable companion of the household. All scholars in accord with the traditional interpretation have naturally taken these passages as the fragments of an old Iranian canine literature. But the theosophists brand this explanation as absurd, and discern in the chapters an allegorical description of conscience and its workings. Space here precludes the citation of other examples of this kind.

When the linguists challenge such interpretations of the ancient texts, they are informed that their inability to reconcile themselves to the new esoteric explanations is due to the fact of not having yet sufficiently developed their spiritual faculties. Highly pungent bitterness is marked in the controversy carried on be-

tween the two parties up to this day. The theosophists in this controversy denounce the philologists, and the philologists denounce the theosophists. Mahatmaic cult and modern scholarship cannot flourish together.

Parsi theosophists as champions of the cause of orthodoxy. The advocacy on the part of the theosophists of the revival of the past, and their seeing in such a revival the sole panacea of communal ills, whether real or imaginary, their readiness to allege religious sanction for the time-hallowed customs, matched with their zeal for ritual, and their eagerness to vindicate the sacred ceremonies by giving strained allegorical interpretations to explain them, win for them the applause of the orthodox party, who now cast in their lot with them. Inasmuch as the Parsi theosophists declare that they are working to bring out the youth of the community from the trough of materialism, and endeavouring to defend Zoroastrianism against innovations of the reformers, they are regarded as the pillars of faith and the guardians of the edifice of ceremonialism.

The average Parsi theosophist is a latitudinarian. He goes to the extent of adopting an outward compliance with the religious practices, which do not form part of his own daily life, on the ground that he does not need them as having already reached a higher plane than his neighbours, and as having ascended the upper rungs of the ladder in the spiritual evolution which they have not yet attained.

It is something of a paradox to find that these champions of orthodoxy should declare that a certain Hindu gentleman of Madras was in one of his previous births the father of Zoroaster, and should be devoutly busy at present in making preparations for the advent of a new prophet, incarnate in a Madrasi Hindu youth, alleged to have been in one of his past births Maidyomah, the Iranian prophet's cousin and first disciple. Could the great Sasanian Church have called a Parsi theosophist holding such views an orthodox Zoroastrian? It would have sooner called him a Vedantist or a Buddhist. There can be no manner of doubt that it would have called him a heretic.

Avestan prayers, however unintelligible, are declared the most efficacious owing to their occult significance. We have already seen the arguments advanced by the reformers against addressing to God prayers in a language unintelligible to the

suppliant, and we have noted the discussion that followed. We now need only notice the part that the theosophists have taken in the controversy. The syllables composed in the Avestan texts, they aver, are so mysteriously adjusted to each other in the prayers, that they produce vibrations on the ethereal plane, when pronounced. The potency of such rhythmical sound is so great that, like every good thought that flashes out with strong occult force and sends forth a good 'elemental,' it creates forms in the ethereal world, attracts good 'elementals,' and repels evil ones. Every single sentence conveys an occult meaning, and the prayers composed in the celestial tongue of the prophet and other seers have an unspeakable efficacy conducing to the welfare of the individual concerned, but their renderings into any modern vernacular would make them totally ineffectual as prayers.

An evil magnetic aura, or malign halo, believed to radiate from a woman during the time of menses, hence her isolation most essential. The orthodox had zealously maintained that woman during her periods carried with her spiritual contagion wherever she went. The theosophists came to the help of the staunch followers of the ancient texts to show that this does happen. They say that the scriptures speak in express terms of the Kingly and Aryan Glory, which scholars in general take to mean the symbolic aggregate of the royal and national greatness of Iran. This glory, it is claimed, in the case of an individual, is his aura, and every human being is surrounded by it. Any one who has developed his inherent clairvoyant powers can see other people's auras, and from their white or black hue, grey or yellow colour, can discern where the individual stands in the realm of spiritual progress. Every individual's aura influences those of all others with whom he comes in contact, and is in turn affected through theirs. The aura of a woman in her menses, according to such a view, is spiritually diseased, and a person gifted with clairvoyant vision can detect evil intelligences clustered about her, equally ready to pounce upon those near her and cause havoc to their spiritual growth. It was for this reason that the elders had wisely legislated absolute quiet for isolating woman during her menses, and it is the pious duty of every faithful believer to observe the rules most scrupulously.

Occult power, according to Parsi theosophic view, emanates from consecrated urine of cattle. The orthodox had

said that it was possible to chase away the wicked druj from man by rubbing over the body the purified fluid obtained from the urine of cattle and that unspeakable spiritual good resulted from drinking this extract, consecrated by holy spells, on solemn occasions. The theosophists now add that the sanctified liquid possesses mysterious qualities, and that the ritual invests it with supersensuous occult powers.

Zoroastrianism in the light of theosophy. These followers of an eclectic philosophy, and interpreters of the divine scriptures through a claimed knowledge of occult and hidden meanings, apply the theosophic principles of explanation to the teachings of Zoroaster, and adapt them to the Zoroastrian theology. Such an interpretation, however, leads them to credit the religion of Zoroaster with ideas that in no period of its religious history were ever included in its sphere, and which, we venture to say, would have sent a Tansar or an Adarbad raving with madness.

When these theosophic interpreters of Zoroastrianism are reminded that the thoughts they claim to read in the canonical Zoroastrian works are not there, they argue with a doubtful historical perspective that if we do not meet them in the plain words, in the authentic texts, it is because the twenty-one Nasks of the prophet have not come down to us. It is wide of the mark to assume in this particular connection that if the bulk of the Zoroastrian canon had not been irrevocably lost to us, we should undoubtedly have found such doctrines to be indissolubly associated with the cardinal texts of the Zoroastrian faith. Every Iranian student knows that the historical sources and records of the teachings of the prophet that were in vogue at any particular period of Zoroastrian history have not perished altogether. Something of every period, whether the Gathic, Avestan, Pahlavi, or the later periods, has fortunately survived the vandalism of the conquering hordes and the ravages of time, and consequently has come down to the present day. For instance, in the controversy regarding the rebirth theory, to which we shall advert below, the theosophic interpreters, having recourse to similar arguments, state that we should have found the theory of transmigration of souls taught in the Zoroastrian works, if these had reached us intact. It might be pointed out, however, that the fragmentary works of all periods of Zoroastrian history have come down to us; they contain the authentic teachings on the

life after death, but they all persistently and systematically speak of only one bodily life on the earth, and never once suggest the theory of rebirth.

Zrvan Akarana as an impersonal God in the theosophic light. The theosophists attempt a readjustment of the Zoroastrian doctrine of a personal God, or rather in accordance with their theory of an impersonal God. Personality, they allege, implies limitation and is a characteristic of the finite. A personal God means that the godhead is a limited God, and therefore an incomplete God. In Zrvan Akarana, or Boundless Time, the Parsi theosophists see this impersonal neuter being of whom nothing can be predicated. This supposititious being is the rootless root from which, we are told, issues Ormazd. Ahriman is but Ormazd's manifested shadow. Zrvan Akarana, the primeval impersonal principle, according to their interpretation, is like a central fire from which all creation has emanated. The individual is only a vital spark, and his final resting-place is in it. Passionately loving the light, the moth finally immolates itself in the flame; in like manner the individual has to throw off the illusory shackles of personality and be merged in the Universal, the One. This doctrine is certainly not Zoroastrian, because through the whole history of the religion individuality is not an illusion. It is ever a stern fact. Personality is not an imperfection, but it is the highest expression of life, that ultimately strives for the divine. Not the losing of individuality and the loss of the personal self, and not the weakening of personality, but the gaining and strengthening of it, is the Zoroastrian ideal. This has been the truth taught by Zoroastrianism in the striving for the highest aims comprehensible to mankind from the remotest antiquity.

Zrvan is extolled above Ormazd, who is still ranked by them as a mere manifestation of Time. The one is elevated by debasing the other. The personal God who can be loved and feared, who responds to the gentle aspirations of the human heart, is dethroned to make room for a monistic principle that may answer the stern canons of cold intellectualism, but which evaporates into an unthinkable abstraction and mercilessly leaves its hapless votaries without a word of solace or hope. Affection, love, and devotion can centre about some personality only. We find in the authoritative teachings of the Zoroastrian Church that

Ormazd knows no peer, and he always sits supreme at the head of the divine hierarchy.

These modern votaries of Zrvan are, however, not to be confounded with the Zarvanite sect of old, which looked to Zrvan Akarana as a personality as much defined as Ormazd. We have already seen that, in postulating impersonated Time as the originator of Ormazd and Ahriman, the sect aimed at supplanting Zoroastrian dualism by monotheism, in order to save their religion from the stigma of dualism. Not so the theosophists, who graft this new feature on the pure teachings of Zoroaster. They do not personify Time, but reckon this abstract principle of Time as higher than Ormazd himself, because, in common with all mystic schools, they hold the idea of an impersonal God as the highest category of philosophical thought.

Zoroastrianism declared by the theosophic claim to be incomplete without the doctrine of transmigration of souls. From first to last the religion of ancient Iran shows no sign of this theory of rebirth. But this dogma occupies a pre-eminent place among the theosophists, being, in fact, one of the most conspicuous characteristics of their doctrines. To teach man to attain liberation from the bondage of rebirth is the ultimate aim of their ethics. It is not regarded by the theosophists as one of the many solutions put forward by the human mind to solve the mysteries of the life after death, but as the only rational explanation that satisfies our instinct of justice, and the only solution of the anomalies in this world. They persuade themselves that the theory is fast becoming a recognized truth in the West, and that, at no distant date, it will be hailed as an inexorable law of nature proved with scientific certitude. With a view to investing their statements with scriptural authority they tear one or two passages from their context, and basing their arguments on these, they declare that they have unearthed the theory from the labyrinth of Zoroastrianism. When the Dasturs and other Parsi scholars assert, in accord with all Iranian scholars of the West, that in no period of the religious history of Iran is metempsychosis ever hinted at in the remotest form, and that the passages referred to have no bearing upon the question, they retort with a strange perversity that the scholarship of the scholars must be at fault, for so great a master as Zoroaster simply could not fail to have taught this fundamental truth. If

facts do not square with their theories, so much the worse for the facts.

But this is not all. Enthused by a zeal for the theory, they go a step further and allege that Zoroaster himself is an Amshaspand incarnate. This is contrary to the spirit of Zoroastrianism. The sacred books speak of the prophet as the greatest of the mortals, the most brilliant among men, even as the star Tishtar is among the infinite stars,[5] and as the noblest soul whose ideal life is a leaven of righteousness to humanity. He is the highest and the greatest ideal of human perfection, the very embodiment of piety. The Gathas give a distinctly visualized image of the personality of Zoroaster. His life is surrounded by a nimbus of miracles in the later period, and most extravagant legends are woven about his personality, but after all that the human language can sing in his praise, he is simply a man, and not an archangel incarnate. So was he during life, and so he is after death. In no period of its history does Zoroastrianism apotheosize its prophet.

How the movement affects the communal character. It is far too early to predict in what direction the esoteric movement is causing the community to drift. But the growing fondness for occult mystery, the strong passion for the marvellous and pursuit after the visionary and impracticable, the leaning towards the ascetic virtues, do not augur well for the community. They threaten to sap the active Zoroastrian virtues that have raised the Parsis to their present eminent position, and to replace them by a flabby kind of morality. It is a bad theory of life that discourages the robust good sense of the community and reduces its energy by weakening its will-power. The disappearance of the communal character would in the end be disastrous. When the whole Indian world is in the throes of a stupendous intellectual upheaval, it is sad to witness a class of enlightened youths cultivating credulity and working its mind into a morbid state by which it loses its grip of common sense and deceives itself with fond delusions.

[5] Yt. 8. 44.

CHAPTER XLVI

ZOROASTRIANISM CEASES TO BE A MISSIONARY RELIGION

The causes that have led the preponderating number of the community to decide against any kind of proselytizing. The era of unprecedented prosperity of the Parsis during the last century has intensified the more their spirit of communal exclusiveness. Zoroastrianism has come to be regarded, more and more, as the communal heritage, and overwhelming numbers of the Parsis have determined to make it exclusively their own. It is their cherished possession, and none outside their fold shall share it. Theirs is a close corporation. One has to be born a Zoroastrian, he cannot become one.

Though no serious attempt has ever been made by the Parsis of India to organize a proselytizing movement with the sole object of propagating their faith, worldly motives on the part of some members of the community have from time to time prompted them to open the question during the last century. Among such motives has been the desire of a matrimonial alliance with an alien woman; the wish to have the children born of such union invested with the sacred shirt and girdle; or again the desire to include in the faith those children born of the Zoroastrian fathers by illegitimate intercourse with non-Zoroastrian mistresses. So bitter have been the controversies thus arising that they have stopped just short of physical violence. The collective conscience of the community has recently declared that it shall not legalize the marital connection with alien women, it shall not consecrate the investiture with the visible emblem of their faith of the children of alien mothers, it shall not legitimatize the conversion of illegitimate children, and for the matter of that it shall have nothing to do with proselytizing at all.

How the decision of the Parsis not to accept any converts affects the future of the community. Of all the ancient prophets of the great religions of the world, Zoroaster has the smallest fol-

lowing at the present day. Only one hundred thousand souls, at the most, acknowledge him as their prophet. If Zoroastrianism is to live in this world as a living faith, it must have sufficient numbers in its fold to keep up its vitality. When such a small community deliberately resolves to erect a huge barrier against all outsiders, it raises various problems of great concern and grave anxiety for its future. It falls in the domain of the social sphere to consider these problems that demand solution from all thinking members of the community. In this present work of religious study, we shall only passingly refer in the next paragraph to some of these vital questions that confront us, leaving their discussion for another volume chiefly devoted to the treatment of the social and economic problems of the community, which I hope to publish at some future time.

The growing cost of living, the increasing inclination in the community for higher standard of living, the custom of dowery, and similar causes, contribute towards the fall in the proportion of marriages among persons of marriageable age. The disinclination to marriage steadily increases. Both bachelors and spinsters try to put off marrying till very late in life. The consequence is fewer children. Besides, there is a growing unwillingness among the married couples of the upper and middle classes to assume parental responsibility. The ratio of births to wives of potential ages shows a decline. Modern civilization is wedded to an insatiable hunger for comfort, and an inordinate devotion to luxury. Children come to be regarded as a source of hindrance to the enjoyment of the social amenities of life on the part of their parents. Hence the restriction on their production. The mode of living of the Parsis as taught by Zoroastrianism, which enjoins bodily cleanness and hygienic principles as religious duties, contributes greatly towards the preservation of young lives, and keeps infant mortality at its lowest. But for all that, the decline in the birth-rate in a community of about a hundred thousand souls that stubbornly repels all proselytes and closes its doors against all aliens threatens its very existence.

CHAPTER XLVII

CONCLUSION

And now we have reached the completion of our study down to the present day. We have traced the gradual development of the religion of Zarathushtra during the various periods of its history. Nearly three thousand years have elapsed since the great prophet first gave the message of Mazda to the people of Iran. Many millions of human souls have lived a happy life and died a peaceful death under the shadow of the protecting wings of the faith. Zarathushtra's immortal triad of 'good thoughts, good words, and good deeds' has kindled the religious zeal, intensified the desire, ennobled the thoughts, illumined the minds, and warmed the hearts of the countless numbers of his followers. Throughout its history Zoroastrianism has seen its bright and dark days, accompanied by the rise and fall of the political power of its adherents. During these ages, great and mighty kings, in whom was concentrated the temporal power of Persia, have ruled over Iran. Yet they are no more. But the one personality in whom was sanctified the spiritual power, the everlastingly greater than kings, has ruled over the hearts of men in all periods of the nation's history and will ever continue to rule so in the ages to come. Zarathushtra, the chosen of Ahura Mazda, does not belong to any single period and particular people, but to all ages and to all peoples. He is unchanging. His religion it was that inspired the Iranian nation with the loftiest of ideals when Iran was at the zenith of her power. His ever optimistic teachings and the ever cheerful spirit of his sublime doctrines saved its remnants from falling into the slough of pessimism and gloom, twelve centuries ago, when the Zoroastrian community stood appalled by the national catastrophe that sounded the death-knell of their empire. With the downfall of the empire the hope of regaining power had disappeared forever. They could never see visions of its restoration. History has recorded this one and unique pathetic instance of a

great nation of millions being reduced to a small community of a hundred thousand souls all told, still true to its ancient faith. Everything that was nearest and dearest to them in the fatherland was gone. Zarathushtra remained their only hope, and with his religion as the only cherished heritage, the Parsi exiles sought an asylum in India. Twelve centuries have dragged their weary course since they first landed on this the land of their hope and began their life anew. Rulers of nations they have not become, but they have proved themselves to be the true bearers of the great name and fame of their illustrious forbears. The pages of their national history are still thrilling with the noble deeds of the ancient Iranians, and their dutiful descendants have faithfully reflected their past national glory in the mirror of their small community. Zoroastrian virtues have made the modern Parsis great. The community has secured a pioneer place in the social, intellectual, and industrial life of the teeming millions of India. They have amassed vast fortunes and have given away equally vast sums for philanthropic purposes without distinction of caste, color, or creed. An individual member among the Parsis to-day is a better cared-for unit than one in any society. The Parsis yearly contribute for his relief at a rate which no people in the world does for its individual member. The virtue of charity has been built into the very communal fibre, and is woven into the tissues of every individual's being. A religion that produces such results in the practical life of a community well deserves the epithet 'excellent,' which the Mazda-worshipping religion of Zarathushtra is given in the Confession of Faith.

With sublime confidence Zarathushtra foretold to the Evil Spirit that his religion will ever live and his followers will do battle with the forces of evil up to the end of the world.[1] His noble faith has weathered the heaviest of storms and survived them; and a religion which stood these trials in the past will stand any trial in the future. Zoroastrianism will live by its eternal verities of the belief in the personality of Ormazd, an abiding faith in the triad of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, the inexorable law of righteousness, the reward and retribution in the life hereafter, the progress of the world towards perfection, and the ultimate triumph of the good over evil through the

[1] Vd. 19. 5.

coming of the Kingdom of Ormazd with the co-operation of man. These are the truest and the greatest realities in life. They are valid for all times. They constitute the lasting element of Zoroastrianism. In the midst of the accretions that have gathered round it during the long period of its life, these immortal truths have remained substantially unchanged, and by them Zoroastrianism will live for all time. Dogmas and rituals are based upon the needs of the times, and as such they are subject to the natural laws of growth and decay. They have their place in the spiritual development of man. They are the accompaniments of religion, but not religion itself. Man may fall away from dogmas and from rituals, and yet he may remain religious. Righteousness rests on the individual's piety, and not on a scrupulous observance of ceremonials, or a practice of elaborate lustrations. Let the Parsi individually, and his community collectively, abide steadfast in the path of righteousness, and they will be practising true Zoroastrianism. In the fret and fever of modern civilization, which renders man exceedingly sensitive to suffering, and lets loose on him the demons of restlessness and discontent, Zarathushtra's religion is the best sedative for him to-day. So will it be in all social unrests, economic crises, and religious upheavals of the future. Zarathushtra has been the hope of the Parsis in the past. So is he now, and so will he be forever.

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